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RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

For the Christian Observer.

THE DUTY AND ADVANTAGES OF RELIGIOUS INTERCOURSE.

MAN has been justly described as a being born for social life: he was intended to have conversational intercourse with his fellow-creatures, and, in the delightful hours of quiet repose, to cheer his exhausted spirits and fit himself for his active duties by a kind interchange of his thoughts and feelings.

It does not, however, usually happen that the subjects which engross the conversation of men in general are those which are really the most interesting and important. Religion, with all its train of lovely and infinitely momentous associations, is but too often banished from social intercourse: the name of the Redeemer is unheard; the joys of heaven and the terrors of perdition are unfelt; all, in fact, is a blank, as far as concerns the best, the spiritual, the immortal part of our nature.

The evils of thus excluding religious topics from our ordinary thoughts and conversation are innumerable; but upon no occasion are they felt more than in those peculiarly hallowed moments in which we appear before God in the assemblies of religion. At such times the soul ought, doubtless, to be elevated to the highest degrees of love, enjoyment, and adoration; heaven and eternity ought to be full in our view; we should rise in heart and mind, under the influences of a gracious Redeemer, and of that ever blessed

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Spirit who is our Enlightener and Sanctifier, to those future glories compared with which all the cares and concerns of this transitory life are not worth a thought.

Far, however, from this ardent desire for the day of sacred rest, with its appropriate enjoyments, being generally visible, the professors of religion too often enter the sacred walls cold and uninterested; or interested only or chiefly by curiosity, or some other feeling as subordinate to that ardour which David, for instance, describes (*Psalm lxxxiv.*) as the piety of the present age is languid compared with his. And what is the natural result? The moments which should be devoted to the higher topics in religion are obliged to be employed again and again in teaching its first elements. Instead of learning to glow with the ardour which so well comports with the magnitude of the hopes and the prospects of the Gospel, men think it much if the ice is just beginning to melt when the sacred service is concluded. Instead of going on to perfection, it becomes necessary to reiterate first principles: instead of new and deep impressions being made, it is often more than can be effected to revive even the past, or to rouse the ignorant inattentive professor of religion to reflect at all upon what it has been the business of the whole week to forget. Were an angel to descend from heaven absorbed in the glories of eternity, how greatly must his tone be lowered before it could meet the apprehension of ordinary Christians!

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The thoughts and language of heaven would not mix freely with the current of other thoughts and language which had been before entertained by the majority of his auditors; so that, instead of beginning with the great subject which filled his bosom, and so late engrossed his celestial converse, he must, perhaps, be content to "feed them with milk, and not with strong meat;" and, by preliminary discussions and appeals, to prepare the way for that perfection of knowledge and intensity of adoration which become the Christian character.

Now among the causes of these unhappy effects, none perhaps, excepting negligence in private devotion, is more conspicuous than our inattention to the duty of maintaining sacred intercourse. Were men's hearts really interested with religion during the week, and their conversation employed in a manner corresponding with such a heavenly frame of mind, it would be quite natural and easy to enter with full purpose of soul into the exalted duties of the Sabbath-day. There would appear nothing strange or unusual in religious thoughts or scriptural language: the soul would be prepared to receive them and to cherish them as they deserve. But when the contrary is the case; when religion has been scarcely, if at all, the subject of our thoughts or conversation for days together, is it to be wondered at that in public worship we feel cold and sceptical, and are more inclined to neglect—perhaps to ridicule or despise—than to cherish with due eagerness, the things that belong to our salvation? Is it surprising that a man who never seriously reflects or converses on religious topics, who scarcely hears even an allusion to them in his commerce with society, should think them "strange things" when brought before him on sacred occasions? Is it wonderful that he with whom the Saviour has not been an object of sacred contemplation

and regard all the week, should be indifferent to him on the Sabbath? Is it astonishing that the language of Scripture appears new, or strange, or unintelligible to him who can live peacefully for weeks or months in total inattention to it? Is it wonderful that a man disbelieves or shrinks on the Sunday from what he has practically disbelieved and shrunk from all the week? As well might a person born blind expect to enjoy the visible beauties of creation, or an illiterate man fully to enter into the topics of the deeply learned, as a man who has neither felt nor conversed on the affairs of eternity in his familiar intercourse with his family and friends, expect to find himself interested, even on solemn occasions, with those supremely-important topics. He retires, in consequence, from the sacred services of religion, either disbelieving what he has heard, or, at least, denying its importance, and steeling his heart against every hallowed impression.

To many persons it may appear a paradox not a little difficult of solution, that while the interests of the soul are currently allowed to be the most important which belong to human nature, religion is so seldom an object of general conversation. Many reasons might, however, be given to account for the circumstance.

With regard to the world at large, it is evident, that they dislike, because they dread, the subject. Too many persons deliberately prefer being blinded for life to opening their eyes to the awful circumstances of their condition. To drive away serious examination into our state before God is one of the principal methods employed by our spiritual enemy to lull us into a fatal security; and our own hearts are but too ready to take a part in his evil devices. Thus it is that the world agree to forget the thoughts of death, and judgment, and eternity; and though they admit that such things must arrive at last, and that perhaps soon

or suddenly, they systematically banish them from their thoughts and conversation.

But this case, however awful, is not a subject for surprise, since we evidently perceive reasons sufficient to account for the fact. But it certainly is more difficult of solution, that *persons professing religion* should be often so backward to perform the duty, and to enjoy the pleasures, of religious intercourse. It is true, there is no deficiency of conversation on subjects *connected* with religion, but which are not religion itself. There is enough, and far more than enough, of controversy and criticism; but when do we hear, even in circles professedly religious, of the more immediate topics of the Christian profession? When do modern Christians converse, as was the case with the primitive church, and with holy men of succeeding ages, respecting the wisdom and the ways of God; the love of the Saviour; the privileges of the Gospel-dispensation; the temptations and discouragements of the Christian, his joys and sorrows, his hopes and fears, with all that concerns his heavenly warfare, and is connected with his present or eternal destination? While we profess to believe in "the communion of saints," it too often appears as if this privilege were reserved only for "the spirits of the just made perfect;" and were too great to be enjoyed during our journey to that better world, where prayer, and praise, and adoration, the love and mercy of God, his providence, and similar topics, will constitute the never wearying subject of eternal converse.

The reason of this defect in the conversation of even religious persons is, usually, that they do not sufficiently cultivate *heavenly-mindedness*; they do not walk humbly and closely with their God. If the heart be "right with God," and if the spiritual powers and graces be in a cor-

responding state of vigour, the tongue will not be wholly unfaithful to its task; for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." It is true, there are many, and those not trivial, difficulties to prevent even the most spiritually-minded Christian from enjoying religious conversation as he might desire. His wish may be often thwarted by the coldness and worldliness of others; his own heart also may wander; or he may dread the thought of appearing to affect a sanctity of character which he is but too conscious how little he deserves. He may not often meet with those "excellent of the earth," with whom David said was all *his* delight, and in whose society "the man after God's own heart" was accustomed to converse on the most interesting of all subjects. But all these drawbacks ought not to prevent his daily aspiring after a more hallowed tone of conversation. To those who really value their religious privileges, what duty can be more delightful, as well as beneficial, than that of mutual intercourse respecting the topics of their common salvation? In this will doubtless consist much of the delight of heaven; and upon earth such hallowed converse will greatly tend to strengthen, comfort, and instruct the Christian, and will prove, under the blessing of God, a powerful means for building him up in his holy faith. But it must not be forgotten, that, in order to be truly spiritually-minded in our conversation, we must be such in our private character. It is in secret meditation and prayer that those sacred graces must be nourished which are to shed a holy radiance around our path. We must enjoy daily communion with God in our own souls, if we would be heavenly-minded in our intercourse with society. It was while the Psalmist of Israel was secretly meditating upon heavenly subjects that the fire so often kindled, till at length "he

spake with his tongue," and invited others to hear "what God had done for his soul." The lamp must be constantly trimmed, and the holy oil supplied in secret, before it can burn steadily and brightly amidst the agitated atmosphere of the world. This habitual spirituality of mind will prevent our *forcing* religion into our conversation, and it will cause it to appear as a natural and beloved inmate of our bosoms. "The good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things." His conversation, far from being hypocritical or affected, will appear but as the natural result of a mind raised to heavenly objects, and engrossed with the concerns of eternity. The rich stream of sacred reflection will not appear as if artificially raised for the occasion, but will flow constantly as from a perennial spring, the exuberance of whose waters evidences the depth and copiousness of the fountain from which they are supplied.

Religious persons, by their abstinence from those doubtful (it would be well if they were never worse than doubtful) amusements and occupations with which others fill up their leisure, may redeem many hours which had otherwise been spent in frivolous gratifications.—Now it is an important duty to see that the time thus gained is devoted to suitable employments. Among the pleasures of a Christian, what can be named more suitable or useful than religious intercourse? A part of the hours which the world give to topics of no real moment, and often of positively injurious tendency, may by the Christian be appropriately and beneficially devoted to subjects of the highest, because of eternal, importance.

We should, however, beware of that unnecessary precision and formality which so often disgust the world without benefiting the church. A religious man may converse reli-

giously, without assuming a singularity of tone or aspect. He should especially cultivate courteousness and affability; and exhibit religion in her native aspect of purity and loveliness. "The first thing in conversation," remarks Dr. Johnson, "is truth; the second is sense, and the third good-humour." The second of these ought to be particularly cherished in the conversation of Christians; for without the cultivation of *good sense*, it is obvious that very painful mistakes may be made as to what is generally proper to be brought forward on a topic so delicate, and so far removed from the ordinary intercourse of mankind. But *truth* is, if possible, of still more importance than even good sense or discretion; and where it truly exists it will oppose the entrance of insincerity, exaggeration, ostentation, affected humility, and other evil tendencies, which are sometimes apt to cling to professedly religious conversation. Above all, we should cherish a *prayerful* spirit: we should habitually rise in heart and mind to the unseen world, in order that we may bring down, as it were, that sacred fire which is to blaze on the altar of the heart, and to enkindle to a flame all the graces of the Christian character. The absence of this sacred aspiration of soul will effectually prevent our cultivating holy intercourse with our fellow-creatures. The defections of the closet will evidence themselves in the hours of social conversation. Conscience will close the lips: it will whisper, "What hast thou to do to take the name of God into thy mouth?" So that, to perform the duty and enjoy the privilege under consideration, we must *be* what we *seem*; we must "grow in grace," and evidence that growth by the increasing spirituality of our deportment; we must learn to love God better, and must prove the increase of that love by

an increasing attention to the duty of glorifying him before men, and of exhibiting in all our words and actions an augmenting veneration for his holy Name.

W.

FAMILY SERMONS. No. CXXX.

Eph v. 2.—*Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.*

It is of great importance in religion to inquire into the secret motives of our actions; for God seeth the heart, and many seeming excellencies deserving praise, perhaps, from men, may exist in a character in which there is no true sense of religion, no love to God or faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. But without these fundamental graces of the Christian life, none of our actions can be pleasing to God. We should beware, therefore, that in considering the necessity of any duty, we do not view it as existing independently of those holy affections of the mind which alone can render it a true or acceptable service to God. The apostolic writers are remarkable for their attention to this point. They seldom or never inculcate duties without laying down principles: they seldom or never enjoin the outward act, without distinctly pointing out the motive from which it ought to spring.

In the words of the text we meet with an illustration of this remark. The duty enjoined by the Apostle is that important one of "walking in love:" the reason assigned for practising it is, that "Christ loved us, and gave himself for us." Rising above all secondary considerations and inferior motives, the Apostle points us at once to that affecting spectacle which is the strongest incitement to gratitude, the most powerful persuasive to obedience, the most forcible motive for cherish-

ing love both to God and man; namely, the love of Christ. But not only is the duty of "walking in love" grounded upon this powerful motive, but every other duty and command rests upon the same foundation. If we would urge the sinner to repent, to turn to God, to be converted and live, to what can we direct him but to the cross of Jesus Christ, who died, the Just for the unjust, to bring us nigh unto God? Or if we would incite the true Christian to greater watchfulness, humility, faith, holiness, or devotion, where can we refer but to the same all-powerful argument?

Let us, then, examine, first, The argument which St. Paul brings forward; and, secondly, The conclusion which he grounds upon it.

First, The Apostle's argument: "Christ hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." We shall perceive the nature of this argument more fully if we consider,

1. The action which Christ performed: "He gave himself unto God for us."

2. The success with which it was attended: He was "a sacrifice" of "a sweet smelling savour."

1. In viewing the action which our Lord performed, how does every circumstance tend to raise our admiration and gratitude!

For, in the first place, *who* was it that thus interested himself for us? Was it one among ourselves, who was touched with a fellow-feeling of our infirmities, and wished to expiate our guilt? Or was it some angelic being, who had looked with compassion upon our fallen race, and was anxious to extricate us from the snare of our spiritual enemy, and to restore us to the happiness from which we had excluded ourselves by our sins? No: it was He whom we had offended that performed this act of mercy: it was He whose laws we had broken that contrived the reme-

dy. It was the Second Person in the ever-blessed Trinity, the Equal with his Father, the Proprietor of eternal majesty and dominion, who thus condescended to act. His own happiness could not be heightened, or his dignity increased: it was, therefore, pure disinterestedness that caused this act of mercy; it was, as the Apostle remarks, because he loved us, that he thus gave himself for us. "We were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of the only begotten Son of God." The infinite dignity, therefore, of the Person is one important circumstance that renders the transaction a just subject of gratitude and astonishment.

Yet how greatly is this display of love and mercy increased, when we consider that the sacrifice was not reluctant or constrained, but cheerful and voluntary. He "*gave*" himself: "Lo I come," said our blessed Redeemer, "to do thy will, O God." His was a free-will offering; an act springing from his own love, and not forced upon him against his consent. He said of himself, "I lay down my life for my sheep: no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself." "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep is dumb before its shearers, so opened he not his mouth."

But not only are the greatness of the Person performing the action, and the voluntary nature of his love, to be considered as increasing our obligation; but also the *costliness* of the sacrifice which he presented. He gave "*himself*;" he did not offer any thing as an equivalent or substitute. To present any created substance had been an easy task: had millions of worlds been required, these might have been made in a moment by his power. But he presented that which had nothing equal or like; that which was infinitely valuable and meritorious; that which raised eternal admiration in heaven,

and ought to excite it still more upon earth: he gave *himself*. He gave his glory in exchange for reproach and dishonour: he gave the acclamations of angels, to submit to the taunts of wicked men: he gave up his heavenly habitation for a world in which he had not where to lay his head: he yielded not merely some of his dignities, or attributes, or perfections, but he gave all that he possessed—he gave himself. His conduct was the very reverse of ours to him: we are often willing to profess his name, to call ourselves his disciples; to admit his doctrines or acknowledge the excellence of his precepts; but to yield our hearts to him, to give ourselves, body and soul, to his service, which is our reasonable obligation, is what we too often submit to with reluctance, nay perhaps wholly neglect to perform.

This leads us to perceive still another consideration which increases the obligations we owe to our Redeemer; namely, that he did not yield his glory, and take upon him a created nature, and submit to sufferings, and reproach, and death, for beings who deserved his mercy and were ready to yield him every return of gratitude and holy affection—but he gave himself "*for us*," for the sinful, the guilty, the rebellious children of men. It is this humbling reflection which adds the fullest lustre to this act of Divine beneficence: "while we were sinners, Christ died for us." Had he waited till man relented, till the hard heart was melted and the rebellious will subdued by the unassisted powers of human nature, he had never undertaken the task. But beholding us just as we were, seeing the wrath to which we were justly exposed, and fully aware of the extent of our baseness and ingratitude as well as of our calamity, he gave himself to expiate our sins, and to open to us the gates of heaven, which had been closed in consequence of our transgression.

But it is far beyond the power of the human mind to understand fully what is implied in the expression, "He gave himself for us:" it was not only a surrender of glories infinitely above our conception, but a submission to pains and sufferings equally immeasurable. If we could calculate the distance between God and man, between the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and the helpless infant laid in a manger; if we could fully comprehend the wide interval between sitting on the throne of heaven surrounded by "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" of angels who waited to do his pleasure and on whom he bestowed joys eternal and unspeakable, and being made a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs, bearing upon him the awful load of our iniquities, and drinking deeply that cup of wrath which was placed in his hands; *then*, perhaps, but not till then, might we form some faint conception of the full emphasis of these words. He gave himself to be made not only a little lower than the angels, but to be despised and rejected among men: He gave himself to suffer pain, and hunger, and reproach; to agonize in the garden of Gethsemane, and to expire upon the cross of Calvary.

2. Let us now inquire, what was the result of this beneficent act; what was the success with which it was attended. The Apostle informs us, that it was "well-pleasing unto God;" it was "an offering and sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour."

We might, perhaps, have imagined, that when the only begotten Son of God condescended thus to become a voluntary offering for man's transgression, his heavenly Father, with whom he was One in his eternal Godhead and power, would scarcely have consented to a sacrifice so great. But happily for mankind the love of Jehovah the Father towards us was equal to that of the Son: he is even said to have himself "given him for

us;" which teaches us, that all the Divine Persons in the Sacred Trinity, equally consented to this scheme of mercy and salvation. The sacrifice, far from being displeasing to God, was of a sweet smelling savour, as well as of an all-powerful efficacy.

The expression in the text conveys an allusion to the sacrifices under the Law; in which, a pure and innocent victim being duly presented, God accepted the offerer, and granted the pardon of his sins. Not that the blood of bulls and goats, or other victims, had any natural efficacy to expiate human transgression; but these sacrifices being instituted by God himself, as typical of that great Sacrifice, which was to be offered once for all, were accepted through virtue of the antitype to which they had reference. If, therefore, these perishable sacrifices were acceptable with God, on account of their being his own appointed ordinance, and being offered by the worshipper through faith in his mercy, or in reference to the expected Messiah, how much more must the great Offering itself have been a sweet savour!—that Offering which God himself appointed before the foundation of the world, and which was prefigured by all the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish dispensation, and even long before that period; for the sacrifice of Noah is in like manner said to have been "a sweet smelling savour unto God."

We are not on this subject to indulge unauthorized speculations, respecting the secret things which belong to God; or to leave the plain facts of Scripture for the sake of inquiring why a sacrifice so painful, so costly, was chosen, or why it was grateful and acceptable to God. We know, and it is enough for us to know, that this great occurrence is plainly revealed, and revealed as the foundation of all our hopes and expectations for eternity. But without venturing upon unscriptural ground, we may discover

many reasons which may be considered as rendering the sacrifice so pleasing, (or as the text expresses it,) "of a sweet savour" to God;—for the Divine attributes were thus rendered conspicuous; and a way was opened which justice did not oppose, nay which both justice and mercy infinitely approved, of pardoning lost mankind. As our Lord himself is said, *for the glory that was set before him*, to have endured the cross, despising the shame, so doubtless the Father also participated in that joy, and yielded the sacrifice for the sake of that eternal triumph which should ensue when, sin being pardoned, death abolished, heaven opened, and everlasting happiness secured for the believer, the Redeemer should "see of the travail of his soul, and should be satisfied."

Having thus weighed the Apostle's argument, we are,

Secondly, To consider the conclusion which he grounds upon it. The sacrifice of Christ, as has been already intimated, may teach us many lessons. It may, in the first place, prove to us the vast extent of our transgressions, which required such an atonement. For it was the guilt of man that caused the sacrifice which we have contemplated: "*He bare our sins in his own body on the tree;*" thus evidencing by his sufferings how great was the offence which we had committed.

We might learn, also, the necessity and duty of submitting to the means of salvation offered in the Gospel. For was all this splendid display of energy and grace to no purpose; or may we slight pardon, so dearly bought, with impunity? "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" The freedom of the blessing, the mercy of God in providing it, in revealing it to us, and in promising us his Holy Spirit to direct us to understand and embrace it, will but enhance our guilt, if we still continue impenitent and unconverted.

But the duty which the Apostle more immediately urges in the text, from the consideration of the sacrifice of Christ is, that of acting up to the holy profession which we make, by cultivating love to God for his unspeakable gift, and love also to our fellow-creatures. "Walk in love." This is our duty and our privilege. Love is the very element in which the Christian breathes; it is the best sign of the reality of our religion: for "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "Whoso loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." And when we reflect upon that unspeakable love of Christ mentioned in the text, how can we profess his name, and yet cherish any angry feeling in our souls? Let it be our aim to repress the first risings of envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness; and when, seduced by temptation or assaulted by our spiritual enemy, we find ourselves in danger of violating this apostolic injunction of walking in love, let us call to mind the love of Christ to us, and let us raise our hearts in prayer to God, "to increase in us that most excellent gift of charity, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before him."

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

WITH your permission, I shall offer a few remarks on a paper in your Number for August, entitled "Sudden Death justly deprecated in the Liturgy." I have no doubt your correspondent, in the last paragraph of his paper, states correctly the origin of the phrase; and it appears to me, that though it might be as well did it not exist in its present form, yet that any evil which can arise from the use of it would be prevented by a general understanding, that the petition is offered up against the approach of death while we are in an unprepared state.

Your correspondent, however, urges the propriety of praying against sudden death, taking the phrase in its common acceptation; and seems to hold that although in this, as in every petition, we must submit to the disposal of God, saying "Thy will be done;" yet that the petition in question may have an appropriate place in the Liturgy—"from *battle, murder, and sudden death*"—and that without any change in the intensity of our feeling we may implore God to be delivered from all of them.

It must be generally acknowledged, that to the unconverted person "sudden death is an awful and irremediable evil," and that it is well for him to pray against it. At the same time I think it is obvious, that were he to pray against death while in a state unprepared for it, the petition would be preferable. It embraces the other, and goes much further. We can conceive of God granting the one petition, and the author of it, after a long illness, dying unchanged. No such observation as this could be applied to the other.

To turn, then, to the true believer, I conceive the general wish of his heart is, that in all things God may be glorified in him—in his life and in his death. There is, probably, no Christian who has seriously considered what an awful thing it is to die, who has not, in innumerable instances, implored the special presence and aid of his Saviour at that solemn season, placing himself unreservedly in his hands, "to whom belong the issues from death," and imploring that he would direct the circumstances of the final scene in his own best way to his heavenly inheritance. But, *generally speaking*, I think the Christian will not go farther, or wish to go farther than this, in his petitions with regard to the circumstances of his death. I should think he would shrink especially from using the petition under consideration, in its more literal meaning,

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when he recalls to mind the sayings of our Lord—"Be ye, therefore, ready; for the Son of man cometh at an hour *ye think not*." "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the *day* nor the *hour* wherein the Son of man cometh;" "at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning."

These passages, I conceive, clearly shew that we have no authority from Scripture on which to build an expectation that a period before death is to be afforded us to renew our languishing graces. Indeed, the Christian, who lives as he ought to live, will have no need of such a time. He lives in the habitual contemplation of death; from his knowledge that "to depart and be with Christ is far better." The man who is not living in this state of habitual preparation, but in the neglect of the command of his Saviour—"be ye ready"—is certainly not to be encouraged in his slothfulness, by the expectation that before death, such space, and such special communication of God's Spirit, shall be afforded him, as to enable him to rise above all his pain, and sickness, and depression, and to "rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."

A death-bed, even to the true and eminent Christian, is frequently a scene of much trial, weakness, and temptation; often accompanied with much depression of spirit, and yields "little visible honour to God," or "benefit to the world." Instances of this nature will readily occur to the mind. Such persons have lived to God; their lives have adorned the doctrine which they professed; but their going down to death, for wise though often inscrutable reasons, is made a time of trial to themselves—it may be, of much distress and uneasiness to their friends. But through this "tribulation" they enter life: they perhaps obtain a greater height of glory. *Christian* seems almost to sink in the swellings of the

river of death, while *Hopeful* gets through rejoicing, and bearing up his sinking brother. Others, again, of his children a merciful Father removes without pain or anxiety, almost in a moment, to their heavenly rest. They seem scarcely to taste of death: God not only finds them completely prepared, but he has no further work on earth for them to perform. They are, therefore, allowed at once to throw off the garment of corruption, and spring into immortality. Do such men "die without a sign?" No: they have left a much better and safer memorial of whose they were, and whose they are, than the most triumphant death-bed could afford. Their lives and their works bear witness of them. To their friends this may be a visitation peculiarly beneficial. It imperatively calls on them, and, indeed, on all who are acquainted with the circumstances, to—"watch." The sudden transition of an open sinner to another world is awful in the extreme, and calculated to strike terror into the minds of his fellow-workers in iniquity. The sudden departure of a believer is glorious: it is solemn, yet delightful, and I apprehend generally it will be considered as a proof of the kindness of his heavenly Father, that he should be allowed to enter his eternal rest, without being exposed to those protracted sufferings which are so frequently our companions through "the valley of the shadow of death."

At the same time, I readily admit, that the death of the righteous man, after a season of severe trial—his resignation, and peace, and joy, under his afflictions—are very instructive to the careless worldling, as well as to the serious Christian. But sudden death also is fraught with important instruction: it is the voice of God speaking peace to his people, and terror to his foes.

Since, then, the petition under consideration may have owed its origin to superstition; since Scripture,

far from encouraging its use, informs us that death *may* very probably come to us suddenly and unexpectedly, and grounds the most pointed admonitions on this solemn consideration; since we are quite ignorant of what may tend either for God's glory or our own peace, in the circumstances of our death; I conceive Christians *in general* (there are exceptions, I doubt not,) ought and will be disposed to leave these circumstances in the hands of Him who has promised to arrange them in the way most calculated to promote his own honour, and their safe admission to that exceeding and eternal weight of glory which is prepared for his people.

A PLAIN CHURCHMAN.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

ALLOW me to make a few remarks upon the following passage, introduced at page 523 of your August Number, in reviewing "Hints for the Improvement of Early Education."

"The first Christians *had a community of property*, under the regulation of proper officers, who distributed to each individual according to his peculiar demands." I think that this, though a very common, is an incorrect assertion. It is generally supposed that the disciples threw all their property into a common fund, out of which the wants of each were supplied. There is no adequate proof that there was any annihilation of individual property, or of those inequalities in it which the Gospel never was designed to supersede; nor does the narrative, when rightly understood, present any thing to our view which is not to take place in every Christian church to the end of the world. We are not left in difficulty as to the meaning of the passage; for we find *widows* mentioned in the sixth chapter, ver. 1, as those who were to be *relieved*; so that *all* did not receive a daily distribution of the bounty of the church. And the lan-

guage of the Apostle Peter to Ananias, ver. 4, "While it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?" plainly marks, that had he not sold the particular possession, (the whole price of which he pretended to bring to the Apostles, in imitation of the liberality of others,) there would have been nothing in his conduct to draw the notice or the censure of his brethren. So that all that we are taught by the words, "all that believed were together and had all things common, and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need," is simply this, that Christians were so much under the influence of disinterested piety, that none of them counted any thing which he possessed his own, so as to withhold what he had and could spare from the necessities of his brethren; and that many, in order to meet the numerous wants of others, turned into money particular possessions which they held; but without reducing themselves to a situation in which they would exactly need relief with those to whom they afforded it. This view is established beyond a doubt by the express mention of a particular individual, who sold a piece of land for this purpose, chap. iv. ver. 36, 37: for why should he be specified by name as having acted so, if what he did was done by *all in similar circumstances*—much more, if there was a universal surrender of all individual property to form a common stock?

GAIUS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

I BEG leave to offer to your miscellany the following translation from St. Chrysostom's commentary on 1 Cor. xvi. 1. This valuable Greek father is doubtless familiar to many of your more informed readers; and I believe he is very generally allow-

ed to stand almost unrivalled in the ancient Christian church, for his fervid though sometimes overflowing eloquence in the cause of pure Christian morality, as well as for his constant and acute defence of that first of Christian tenets, the doctrine of the Sacred Trinity. It is, however, neither to his doctrine, nor simply to his morality, that the present extract furnishes an appeal. It refers, indeed, to a point connected with those charities which have been alike in every age dear to the Christian; but it still refers more particularly to a point of church practice in that respect, on which an ancient writer may be supposed to possess a peculiar authority. It will shew that the practice of obtaining the contributions of the poor as well as the rich, by means of small weekly payments, was not unknown in times of unquestioned precedent in such a case. Such expedients, of which it is difficult to say, whether they have been more vilified as instruments of oppression to the lower orders, or as badges of a mean and paltry spirit of collection on the part of their superiors, will, I apprehend, from this account be found to have been set on foot by an Apostle, and sanctioned by one of the most eminent of his successors, the pious, the devoted, and the humble though exalted Archbishop of Constantinople. Without intending to deprive the first author of modern penny societies of the credit of that invaluable invention, or pretending to have found the record of a Constantinople Ladies' Penny Association, either Bible or Missionary, in the archives of the Grand Seigneur; I think that enough will appear in the plain apostolic injunction, enforced by his eloquent and feeling commentator four hundred years after, to convince us that the primitive church of Christians was not ashamed of the exercise of charity in its humblest departments; nor the rich of throwing their contributions into the same treasury with

the two mites of the poor widow. It does not appear that shame was *universally* felt, even in soliciting such contributions: nor that a venerable patriarch of a renowned metropolis thought that he had condescended too far in stretching forth a supplicatory hand to the poorest of his flock, or in reiterating the words of One more exalted but not less humble than the patriarch, who at *that* day shall acknowledge the charity as done to himself.

I remain, sir, &c.

A FRIEND TO PENNY SUBSCRIPTIONS.

1 Cor. xvi. 2.—*Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.....*

“Observe, the Apostle has regard to seasons: the day itself is suited to the exercise of charity. As much as to say, Remember what you have yourselves received on that day—blessings unspeakable—the root and first principle of our eternal hopes—and not only on this account, but as a day of relaxation and rest from labour, it is sufficiently suited to the purposes of benevolence. The mind, released from its own burdens, is more at liberty to attend and minister to the wants of others. The holy mysteries on that day add also their weight to the demands of benevolence. Be then *every one of you* so engaged: not merely this or that person, but let *every one*, whether rich or poor, male or female, bond or free, ‘lay by him in store.’ The Apostle says not, bring it at once to the church, lest by its smallness it should excite contempt: but when, by little accumulations, the offering shall have swelled to a considerable amount, present it to me at my coming. Till then, retain it in thy own possession, and let thy house be as it were, the church; thy coffer in the place of the holy treasury. I know, indeed, that some of your wise coun-

sellors will find fault, when we mention such things, and cry out, Do not, I pray, do not lay on your audience burdens heavy and grievous to be borne: leave it to their own choice, leave something to the discretion of the hearer: you really put us to shame; you make us blush.—Now I cannot endure this reasoning. Paul was not ashamed of using the utmost vehemence in such matters, and even adopting a species of begging language. If, indeed, he had said, Let what I ask be my own, a part of my household store, the request then might have worn a different complexion. But now for whose benefit do I ask? for the benefit of those who have need, nay, rather for your own, who give. I feel no shame in such a cause. Where is the shame of saying, ‘Your Lord is an hungred, feed him; naked, clothe him; a stranger, take him in.’ Is the Lord of the universe himself not ashamed to say, ‘I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat?’ He, who is all-sufficient, and who lacketh nothing, and shall I feel confusion and hesitation? Far from it. It is the shame of devils, and consonant only to their evil dispositions. I will feel no shame, I will speak with boldness, a boldness even greater than of the very persons who need your alms. If, indeed, you can prove that we thus speak to draw you over to our own uses, and make a profit to ourselves under the plea of the poor, our conduct would not only deserve the contempt of men, but the very thunders of Heaven: life itself should be the purchase of such hypocrisy. But if for the love of God, and not for ourselves, we labour, rendering, as it respects ourselves, the Gospel of Christ without charge, I will then urge the demand, ‘Give to them who need.’ I will reiterate my words; I will relax nothing from my severity of reproof against those who withhold their alms. Were I a commander

of troops, should I be ashamed of demanding provision for my soldiers? And shall I speak less boldly where your salvation is concerned? But to render the appeal at once irresistible and conclusive, I will take Paul himself for my example: I will urge in his own words, 'Let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him.' Observe, however, here, his winning and inoffensive method. He did not say so much or so much, but 'as God has prospered him,' whether it be little or much; and not the gain that each has made, but 'as God has prospered him,' shewing all success to be derived from thence. And not only thus, but he still further lightens the task, improved by his advice, in not requiring all to be contributed at one time; for, in collecting by little and little, the service and sacrifice demanded becomes imperceptible to the offerer."

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

In our authorized translation of 1 Tim. i. 8, 9. the Apostle is represented as saying, "We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man." The ambiguity of the word "made," in the last clause, has, unintentionally on the part of the translators, furnished the Antinomian with a plausible argument. It is urged, that believers being complete in Christ's imputed righteousness, the law is not made for them: they can no more be punished for breaking the moral than transgressing the ceremonial law. But in the sense intended by the Antinomian, it is not true that "the law is not made for the righteous." Were not angels and our first parents righteous, when God made for them the [then] easy yoke of the law of innocence? And is not the law made for the absolution of the righteous, as well as for the condemnation of the wicked? Hap-

pily, St. Paul does not speak the unguarded words which we impute to him, for he says, *δικαιῶ νόμος & κείται*, literally, *the law lieth not at, or is not levelled against, a righteous man, but against the lawless and disobedient*; that is, against those who break it. This literal sense perfectly agrees with the Apostle's doctrine, where he says, "Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou, then, not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have [absolution and] praise of the same."

This ambiguity of our translation seems to be countenanced by a similar one (Gal. v. 23.) "against such there is no law." Just as if the Apostle had said, *εἰ νόμος ἔδειξ*: whereas his words are *κατὰ τὸν τοιαύτων οὐκ εἰ νόμος*; literally, *the law is not against such*. As there is no medium between the condemnation and the absolution of the law, the moment the law does not condemn a believer it acquits him: and consequently every penitent and obedient believer is actually justified by the law of Christ, agreeably to Rom. ii. 13, and Matt. xii. 37; for, says the Apostle, "the law is not *against* such," plainly intimating that it is *for them*.

Certain divines endeavour to make us as much afraid of the Decalogue, as of a battery of cannon. With such a design the pious Bunyan says in one of his unguarded moments, "Have a care of these great guns, the Ten Commandments;" just as if it were as desperate an attempt to look into the law of God, as into the mouths of loaded cannons. What a liberty is here taken, both with the Law and the Gospel! Why will not our controversialists perceive that it does not follow, because the law is not available for all the purposes to which the self-justiciary would bend it, that, therefore, it is not of more value or importance than is attached to it by the Antinomian? D.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

IN these days of innovation, when no institution, sacred or profane, is free from the rage of lawless novelty, a prudent man is almost afraid to throw out any hint which may appear to savour of the modern spirit of reformation. Even a recurrence to an ancient practice, where that practice is very generally superseded, may appear like an innovation, and, therefore, at the present moment be assailed with prejudices to which it is not fairly exposed.

The subject to which I intend to apply this remark, is the provision made in the regulations for building new churches, by which it is recommended to have a *third* service, in places where the whole of the neighbourhood may not be able to find accommodation during the former parts of the day. The excellence and utility of a third service, in populous parishes, is too well established to need an apology. Indeed, the change of customs and the alteration of hours in modern society, have rendered an *evening* service (I mean a service between the hours of six and eight) almost indispensable, wherever it is wished to keep the latter half of the Sunday free from the indolence or excesses to which it is so often devoted. Many of our ecclesiastical dignitaries, who at first most resisted this practice as an unnecessary if not a dangerous and fanatical innovation, have at length acknowledged its importance, and have felt it their duty to give it their support. To many persons, particularly the servants of families in which religion is slighted, the third service is the only part of the day in which they can find an opportunity of attending public worship; and, generally speaking, if these services did nothing more than decoy our Sunday evening idlers, and direct them from vagrancy and mischief, from the ale-house, and the

haunts of vice and frivolity, they would be of incalculable benefit. A churchman cannot forget to add, that they tend to retain within the fold of the Establishment those of our flocks who would otherwise take the opportunity of wandering in search of other pastures.

I cannot, therefore, be supposed to object to evening services, when I suggest the obvious impropriety of using precisely the same form of worship twice in the same day, at the same place. Wherever the afternoon prayers are employed twice, the congregation is found to be divided; the same persons seldom or never attend both times, except a few, who, for the sake of a new sermon, are willing to go twice through the same prayers, which, generally speaking, cannot be "for the use of edifying." The result has been, that the afternoon worship is very generally considered as intended only for the servants and younger children of the morning congregation, and very few other persons think of attending. I do not deny that many conveniences arise from this practice, though it is not without great inconveniences also; among which may be mentioned, that many persons who do not choose either to attend an evening service, or to appear with their servants and children in the afternoon, learn to content themselves with attending only in the morning.

The remedy which I would propose for these several inconveniences is, that wherever there are three services in one day, the proper divisions in our church worship should be retained. It was never intended that the Morning Prayers, the Litany, and the Communion Office should be blended into one service—a practice from which arise numerous evils. It is this which has caused so many persons to charge us with vain repetitions; the Lord's Prayer, for instance, occurring several times,

and our creed being twice rehearsed, besides individual petitions which are to be found in all the separate portions of these combined forms. The immoderate length also of this double or triple office, with a sermon appended, is sometimes too much for the most spiritually-minded of our congregation; to say nothing of the undisguised weariness manifested by others, and the fatigue to the officiating minister. Indeed, I believe the mere length of our service has done more to drive thoughtless persons from the Church to the Meeting, than almost any other cause.

There was a time when persons did not think it too much to attend public worship three times. For this, three services were provided; namely, first the Morning Prayers, strictly so called; secondly, Communion Service; and, thirdly, the Evening Prayers. Now, if in those days, when sermons were comparatively infrequent, and the age more devotionally inclined than in modern times, it was thought necessary to make such a division, how much more is it necessary in the present age; especially as the sermon has come to be considered by all a very important, by many, though unjustly, the *most* important, part of the service?

The Litany and Communion Service are so excellent, that I should be very far from wishing to see them less in use than at present; so that, where there are but two services, it might be as well, perhaps, to leave matters as they stand. But where there are three services, as is intended to be the case in many of the new

and enlarged churches, it would be found a suitable occasion both of bringing back the ancient custom and of benefiting all parties concerned. I shall not occupy your pages with pointing out the numerous advantages of the plan, which will readily suggest themselves to every considerate reader. It will be enough to have suggested it, in hopes of its meeting the eye of some of those who are best qualified to judge of its propriety, and, if proper, to take the steps requisite for its resumption. I will only add, that I have ample authority for the suggestion among our principal ritualists, and especially Wheatley, who remarks, amidst other observations to the same purpose: "The Communion Office was originally designed to be distinct, and to be introduced with the Litany, and consequently to be used at a different time from Morning Prayer." "The offices," he continues, "are still as distinct as ever, and ought to be read at different times; a custom which, Bishop Overall says, was observed in his time in York and Chichester; and the same practice, Mr. Johnson tells us, prevailed at Canterbury, long since the Restoration—as it did very lately, if it does not still, at the cathedral of Worcester. It is certain that the Communion Office still retains the old name of the *Second Service*; and Bishop Overall imputes it to the negligence of ministers and the carelessness of people that they are huddled together into one office."

—See *Wheatley on the Common Prayer*.

PHILO-RUBRICO.

MISCELLANEOUS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

WE are in the sixth year of peace, and of almost universal estrange-

ment from home; yet none of the travelled readers of your journal have retraced their route in its pages.

During their reserve, I shall venture to forward the inclosed selections from the amplified correspondence of a gentleman, who confined *his* tour within the limits of our own country. If his representations may be credited, he appears to have found in his native island what others suppose themselves compelled to seek exclusively on the continent. The example is, at least, worthy of imitation. It seems hard, that our compatriots should wander over Europe, before they have exhausted their domestic treasures. Should you consider these papers to be coincident with the general design of your work, I shall be gratified by their publication. I have judged it expedient to explain or extend some of my friend's remarks, by occasional notes. They are distinguished from the writer's own by the initial of my signature.

QUÆSITOR.

"October 1, 1819.

"My dear sir,—I suppose that few of us are strangers to the pleasure, derived from reading a friend's observations on countries already explored by ourselves. It is something like revisiting them in his society. On this consideration, independently of others of a less personal character, I am encouraged to obey your wishes, in detailing some of the minor adventures of a summer's ramble into Scotland. I am afraid you will detect more than the traveller's allowed average number of mistakes, in what can scarcely be otherwise than dubious statements; reported, as these necessarily were, by a passing looker-on, who had only time to gain hasty glances over the surface, either of mountains or of manners. As to the opinions sprinkled among my letters, I am conscious of having offered some to your acceptance, from which, essentially as we agree on all important subjects, I strongly anticipate your direct, or, in any event, qualified dissent.

From the central district of South Britain, I commenced my tour on the 10th of last May; but did not enter Scotland till the afternoon of the 18th, when I passed the Tweed at Coldstream. To a person resident, like a friend of your's, within a mile of the low and level banks of the Trent—in saying which, I mean no disrespect to its fertilizing, and in various other points meritorious, waters—the appearance of the border stream conveys highly pleasurable impressions of the more softened characteristics of the river scenery of Scotland;—its current fretting over a rocky channel, its lofty banks partially fringed with copse-wood, and the easy curvatures of its course, appear and vanish at intervals, all the way from the bridge to Kelso; in other respects, the look of the country is purely English. Kelso itself is situated at the confluence of the Tweed and Tiviot; and as it is the first town of any consequence on the northern marches, it became the duty of a Southron to survey it with attention. I was struck with its spacious square of handsome stone buildings, and with the enlivening air of freshness and prosperity diffused over the town and its environs. In these circumstances, it is evidently superior to English places of similar rank and population.

"Caledonia is soon discovered to be the region of romantic associations. Not very far from Kelso, on the road towards Lauder, are described the Eildon Hills; which, with their circumjacent territories, as you well know, are *consecrated* by the genius of Mr. Walter Scott. Yet here, the prepared fervour of the imagination is prematurely chilled, as, from this point of actual sight, they ill deserve the character of picturesque, conferred upon them by the living minstrel's decision. Their shape, and what is more deeply to be regretted, their colour—the latter being modified by the blue distance—are those of the evident sugar loaf, and no substitution

of the compromising term of conical figure, can reconcile the eye to their obtrusion on the general amenity of the landscape. It may be incidentally observed, in this connexion, that the very deformities of nature are not without their attractions. The candour of Gilpin towards nature's abrupt deviations from her usual course, prompted him to tolerate and even admire a similar act of violence done to the Clyde, by the twin elevations of rock-work at Dumbarton Castle. To these I shall have occasion to recur, and, in the mean time entreat you to excuse my imprudence in calling in question, not merely certain of this classical tourist's individual opinions; but the doctrines of many other professors of the picturesque, who have either studied in his school, or formed for themselves, and for as many as will subscribe to their creeds and canons, original systems of the sublime and beautiful. I hold it to be impossible for a conscientious traveller to admire a country through the spectacles of books and paintings. When the philosopher has defined, and the artist illustrated, the leading principles of taste, and the common observer acquired, under their guidance, the elements of picturesque science, their pupil had better be then abandoned to his own deductions, with all his liability to admire and dislike in the wrong place. He may indeed fall into grievous errors; but the mistakes occasioned by the ignorance of a novice will be more readily forgiven than those of pretence. Amateurs of the secondary order usually live in much bondage to the rules of their art. Individuals of this class are often the objects, as I have reason to know, of your own commiseration, especially when, for example, they are the companions of an autumnal evening's ramble. On such occasions, and as the scenery of the walk is disclosed, they seldom dare to feel or express delight, till they have adjusted the

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composition of every prospect, by referring to the requisite lights, shadows, tints, distances, groups, and atmospheric influences. For all, indeed, that I know to the contrary, our friends of this complexion may drink in with delirious rapture, what brings to you and myself sensations of merely sedate pleasure. They may also, on the other hand, become the unconscious victims of their own theories, and find nothing but insipidity in scenes which to ourselves are surpassingly beautiful. Whatever be their mysterious case, I would refer them to the Eildon Hills.

"Near Lauder appears its castle, which is understood to have powerful attractions for the antiquarian. From this place nothing particularly called for attention, till I reached the summit of the Soutra Hills, forming the termination of the ridges of Lammormore. Earlier in the evening, and had that evening been favourable, the extensive prospect from this height must have been one of diversified beauty. But the atmosphere was hazy and darkening; so that Edinburgh, the centre and principal figure of the picture was but dimly discernible.

"To every one who, for the first time, surveys from the battlements of Nelson's monument on the Calton Hill, the panoramic exhibition of Edinburgh, and its surrounding regions, the predominant impression will certainly be that of astonishment at the unusual *originality*, and composite character of the vision. The confused accumulation of buildings, encrusting the summit and acclivities of the ridge of the old town, gradually rising from Holyrood House, or its vicinity, towards its termination in the *alatum castrum*, (for by this graphic phrase the Romans, it appears, described the castle rock,) the contrasted regular lines of modern architecture disposed on the parallel levels of the New Town, introduced almost immediately under the spectator's eye by the rising

magnificence of the Regent's Bridge; the excavation of the North Loch, distinctly separating the two divisions of the city; the mountainous conformations of Arthur's Seat, with the precipices of Salisbury Crags; the far stretching shores of the Frith of Forth along the coast of Fifeshire, with the more distant boundaries of the Ochil and Grampian Hills; the near elevations of Pentland, and the sylvan Corstorphine; the intermediate foreground towards Leith, of rich and variegated country; the majestic estuary itself, with its many islands, including, especially Inch Keith, with its light-house, and Inch May remotely situated in the German Ocean; this extraordinary combination of antique and modernized architecture, of inland and maritime scenery, of uncultured and decorative nature, of a commercial and fashionable metropolis, forms altogether a spectacle which, according to the calculations of a Briton, defies the rival splendors of any continental city. Neither is the visitor disappointed, when he descends from this circling, luxurious vision (in order to survey which to perfection, he must be favoured with the serene and cloudless atmosphere of a bright summer day,) and examines the principal avenues and edifices of this capital. In these he will discover, what none will hesitate to call a brave defiance of expense, if it be true, as confidently asserted, that upwards of 800,000*l.* have, within these two years, been sunk in building what may almost be called appendages to a previously finished city. He will observe also a display of correct taste, and a general unity of design, both in public and private erections, indicative of the enterprize and national spirit, of the industry and firmness of purpose, which appear almost exclusively to characterize this populous and busy nest of human termites. Let the visitor, however, confine himself, if he wish to retain emotions of pleasurable novelty, to

the west end of the town, (which, I am afraid, however, is in reality, the north,) and to the main streets on the south side of the valley of division. He will not with impunity descend into the gloomy profound of the Canongate and Cowgate, nor with impunity explore the many suffocating closes and wynds, which seem to have been purposely constructed for the accommodation of the direst forms of contagion and pauperism; but which, and it is but justice to add this, narrow and uncleanly as they are, will be found to be nearly as wide and pure as numbers of the courts and alleys of London. Should the visitor indeed venture into these dismal deeps, he will, on emerging, feel with more poignancy of pleasure than ever, the 'breath of heaven, fresh blowing' along the elevated and cheerful sites of Prince's and Queen Streets, and the intervening squares and avenues.

"There is a deviation from the rectangular model of Edinburgh, presenting from a point on the Leith Walk, I think, one of the finest appearances in all the metropolis. The view in question is seen when you stand in such a situation as to command the lengthened perspective up Picardy Place, towards the termination of Queen Street, together with the curvatures of building stretching towards St. James's Square and the arch of the Regent's Bridge. This variety illustrates, incidentally, the good taste of the Americans (of which, as some affirm, they have no oppressive share, and, even on this occasion, borrowed what was wanted of a French artist,) in building their unbuilt capital of Washington on a plan capable, with the exception of the curved line, of exhibiting many resemblances of the view referred to at Edinburgh. Wishing them all success in completing the federal city, I proceed, in the mean time, to remark, that the northern capital derives much adventitious beauty from the circumstance of the stone

retaining its original colour. In this respect, how different, for instance, is the almost unpolluted, and uniform hue of the Register Office, from the ebon and ivory, or rather from the chalky and sooty patchwork of St. Paul's! This freshness of surface, of course, augments the air of novelty and neatness, so eminently characteristic of the New Town.

"Among the most ambitious, and successful efforts of architecture in modern Edinburgh, must be classed the episcopal chapels of St. John and St. Paul. Both of these structures are of recent erection, and were opened in the early part of last year. The elevation of the exterior of St. John's is obviously disproportionate to its other dimensions; and this is the only apparent imperfection, in the shell of an edifice of singular pretensions to beauty. The alleged imperfection is indeed relieved by a low cemetery, forming a continuation of the chancel end; although many persons consider this addition as detracting from the symmetry of the original design. The interior of the chapel is, of course, injured in its proportions, by the elevation of the ceiling. The defect would be considerably diminished by placing galleries over the side aisles. I ought to have mentioned before, that the architect was all along embarrassed by the circumstance of an intention, never fulfilled on the part of his employers, of erecting those additional accommodations; and that the same cause operated unfavourably on his scientific credit, in respect to the situation and figure of the windows. While these points are referred to the decision of the critics, the untaught visitor will be captivated by the elaborate and finished ceiling; copied, I believe, from that of Henry the Seventh's Chapel in Westminster Abbey, and supported by two

ponding precision and elegance. All the windows are glazed with opaque or orange-coloured glass, except the great one in the chancel. In this there is a circular compartment in its arch, over the tracery of which is distributed a painting introduced with great skill and effect. The inferior divisions of the windows are polluted by the representation of a large St. Andrew's cross,—so obtrusive and unsightly, that it is difficult to imagine by what laborious inconsistency the same persons could have devised and executed such discordant specimens of beauty and deformity. The enthusiast in ecclesiastical architecture will be consoled by hearing, that measures are about to be taken to effect its removal. I was gratified, in a secondary degree, by the address and ingenuity discovered in the minor arrangements and decorations of this chapel. Every thing is in perfect costume, not a pannel, moulding, cornice, no minuteness of ornament, but what entirely accords to Gothic purity. The organ-case, desks, pulpit, and communion rails, are severally of exquisite workmanship, and the carved specimens, especially on the pulpit and in front of the organ gallery, can scarcely shrink from a comparison with the sculptures of Roslin and Melrose. The impressions awakened and sustained by a survey of St. John's, are repeated, with some modification, by an examination of the sister chapel of St. Paul, in York Place. The shell of this structure bears a miniature resemblance to King's College Chapel, Cambridge; and the present perfection of art here also arrests and retains the spectator's admiration. It is observable, that as its exterior exceeds in beauty that of St. John's, the inside evidently yields to the rival chapel. The ceiling here is very ill managed: it is a blemish, affecting the whole aspect of what, in most other respects, may dispute the palm

of architectural elegance with St. John's. The roof in question is, I suspect, an example of inconsistent Gothic, and has an appearance of being composed of something like oak rafters, modelled according to some after design, into an unsuccessful imitation of stone work. The architect, I think, would have done better, by constructing a real and ostensible wood ceiling, on the plan of one of the various specimens to be found in the chapels and halls of the English Universities. Taking the two chapels altogether, they deserve to be regarded as almost an unique, and certainly a most spirited, revival of the sacred architecture of the fifteenth century, which, as the learned assert, was the age of the purest Gothic. You are a better judge than myself, whether any such edifices, built at least for religious purposes, have been erected since the Reformation. When gazing on these rich and chastely embellished piles, it was impossible not to contrast with them, what to myself has appeared the meretricious vulgarity of the interior of a new church which I could name, and (I wish the instance may be solitary) recently *got up* in the southern metropolis. What an unaccountable confusion does it present of altar, desks, pulpit and organ, (with its central transparency, like a tavern exhibition on the night of an illumination!) all commingled at one end of a church, the other arrangements of which offer nothing like a compensation for its accumulations of deformity! *Without*, indeed, there is a fine portico, but not to be distinguished, by a common observer, from those of St. George's, Hanover Square, and St. Martin's in the Fields: so that while its beauty is copied, its disfigurements are purely original.* I

* The writer refers, I suppose, to the new church in Mary-le-bone, concerning which he might have given a still worse report. The cost of it is stated to have exceeded

wish you could persuade the builders of the new churches now contemplated, to sit for once at the feet of their brethren in Edinburgh.

"The external beauty of holiness diffused over the two episcopal chapels in Edinburgh, will not, I am well convinced, ensnare *you* into the opinion, that an ultra-passion for the shewy apparatus of public worship indicates a religious state of mind. For such a state, it is, too frequently, the dazzling and pernicious substitute; however possible it may be, on the other hand, for the most devout worshipper to approach the Throne of Grace, when surrounded by what, in themselves are, at best, the shadows of devotion.—From whatever cause, the episcopal party in Edinburgh is evidently increasing in numbers, personal consideration, and resources. It appears to invite their inquiry, in what degree their ranks have been recruited, by the exhibitions of ecclesiastical splendor and human eloquence. The worship at St. John's is conducted with much solemnity. The congregation is numerous and fashionable; but does not seem to be augmented by the presence of any poor persons. The titular Bishop of Edinburgh presides over this assembly, assumes the costume of an English prelate, and occupies, when not engaged in the service, a kind of canopied stall on the right side of the altar. From this he pronounces the absolution, and, when he does not preach, the final benediction. I heard him deliver a sermon with considerable impressiveness; and if his doctrine, on this occasion, were an example of the general instruction afforded to the congregation of St. John's, they have reason to be thankful. The religious tone of the pulpit of St Paul's is well known to the world, by the published sermons of its two officiating

40,000*l*. The expense of St John's was about 15,000*l*.; and of St Paul's, 12,000*l*.
Q.

ministers. Whatever be the intellectual merit of those discourses, it is impossible for such as gather their doctrines and estimates of practical religion from the New Testament, to allow that the divines in question have discovered any serious anxiety to draw their systems from the same source.* If their congregation is, in part, formed of proselytes gained from other communions by the system at present current in York Place—observe, I only speak on the supposition of the identity of their published and spoken sermons—what thinking Christian can congratulate either the converter or the convert! If the episcopal cause be rising on such a foundation as the one here implied, it must either totter and fall; or, in the event of its permanence, will be sustained by the principles and fashions of this world. And if the same cause receives strength in another direction; I

* My reluctance to communicate this part of my correspondent's MS. on the score of its being personal, and, in fact, disparaging to the individuals concerned, was overcome by the consideration, that he refers to them exclusively as authors, who have themselves made an appeal to the world, virtually inviting public observation and scrutiny. In this view, to have refrained from all allusion to their writings would have been indicative of false shame. You have divulged your own opinions of Mr. Alison's sermons without equivocation (*Christian Observer*, for 1815, pp. 109—118;) and the reader will judge how far your sentiments on the subject coincide with my own, when I speak of having found in them a kind of sentimental Theism, so widening the strait gate, and expanding the narrow way, as that *many* pass through the one, and throng the other, without exertion or difficulty; a scheme of instruction connected with no conviction of the original guilt of mankind, and with at best a very scanty reference to the Gospel as necessarily a remedial dispensation, and recommending some shew of indulgent virtue, such as may gain credit among mankind in the absence of Christian holiness.

Q.

mean, from the persuasion, on the part of its adherents, of the divine right of episcopacy, and of that form of polity being essential to the existence of a Christian church;—here, also, is a second ground of attachment, too capable of being cherished and inculcated, sometimes in the absence of personal piety, and sometimes to its virtual exclusion. What may be the real state of religion—of personal, individual, religion—in the episcopal communion of Scotland, the bystander of a day cannot presume to calculate. But whoever reads Skinner's *Annals of Scottish Episcopacy* cannot avoid seeing the *danger*, at least, incurred by our sister church, of making high and apparently extravagant demands on the subject of its external government; in which case, the inference, with the majority of its converts, will certainly be, that an Episcopalian is almost a synonyme for a Christian. The Episcopalians in Scotland are exposed to the temptation common to all religious minorities, of managing their spiritual concerns more with a reference to their aggregate as a church, than to their individual responsibilities, as beings placed in this world to prepare for eternity, and who must finally be either saved or lost; not as members of any specific community, but as having either accepted or refused the offers of the Gospel made to mankind at large. The forgetfulness or desertion of this very serious view of Christianity itself does not properly interfere with the question, whether Episcopacy is, or is not, an apostolic ordinance, but with something of far higher importance—our own everlasting state. It is one great practical heresy of the universal church: and hence the spirit of mere proselytism detects itself to be a human, selfish, sectarian passion; and its

abettors, of whatever communion, shew their spoils, with a vanity and conscious claim to the applauses of their own party, which no sophistry can reconcile with the diffident and lowly spirit of the Gospel. Some of us draw men from Popery to Protestantism; others from Presbyterianism to Episcopacy: a third party effects the converse; and there are those who reason the Socinian into the catholic doctrine of the Trinity: and all these various forms of conversion may, and do take place, in persons who cross over to a new party, without the sacrifice of one sin, or the acquisition of a single virtue; and who continue to wear the fetters of that world in which their conversion found them. Correct opinions are unquestionably valuable, as far as they go; but we delude ourselves in estimating their extent. With what tardiness do we learn to discriminate between sentiments and springs of action; between opinions sleeping quiescent in the understanding, and principles governing the conduct! Conversion, or regeneration, when it takes place, in its highest sense,* and by the intervention of human means, does any thing but inflate the instrument with notions of his own importance. If this kind of conversion were the primary ob-

* "REGENERATION. Birth by grace from carnal affections to a Christian life."

JOHNSON.

If your readers should not choose to admit the authority of Dr. Johnson, on account of his being a layman, though all must allow him to have been an orthodox one, I will add the testimony of Hammond the commentator, who remarks:—"A regenerate man and a child of God are all one, and signify *him that lives a pious and godly life, and continues to do so.*" (See Hammond's Annotations, John iii. 2.)

The same commentator remarks (on 1 John iii. 14,) "We know that we are regenerate Christians by our charity to other men, which he that hath not is clearly an unregenerate and unchristian person."

Q.

ject among us, the dissensions of the church would naturally be absorbed in endeavours, not to swell the number of our adherents, but to spiritualize and save their souls.

(To be continued.)

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

IN the Number of your publication for August, 1818, are some remarks on the "Expediency of teaching the Deaf and Dumb to articulate." I am glad to see that you do not consider any field of benevolent effort beneath your regard, and that you are anxious to do good even to such humble and uncomplaining sufferers as the deaf and dumb. I have always felt a deep interest in "these lonely heathen of a Christian land;" and, because I have had very dear friends in this helpless condition, I have endeavoured to make myself familiarly acquainted with the modes of their instruction, and even at length to venture so far as to attempt, perhaps in a very imperfect manner, to teach a few of them, according to the general outlines of the system pursued by the Abbé Sicard, whose works on this subject, I have studied with deep interest and attention. I was forcibly struck with a remark in the article to which I have alluded in these words: "There is really no more intrinsic connexion between written and spoken words and ideas, than between *signs* and ideas: indeed, the language of the deaf and dumb is abundantly more significant than any other, inasmuch as it denotes that change which takes place in our bodies and countenances, by the movements of the soul; and so far as intellectual processes bear any analogy to the motions of matter, it shadows forth this analogy in very striking and significant emblems."

This is so true, Mr. Editor, that I think it almost capable of demonstration, that the deaf and dumb can learn the English, or any other language, only just so far as their own native language of signs is employed as a medium of interpretation. No sounds can be addressed to their *ear*. If a written or articulate word is addressed to their *eye*, it must, previous to explanation by signs, be perfectly unintelligible. If I utter the word "hat," or write it, there is no analogy between either the spoken or written sign and the object; but if I describe in the native language of the deaf and dumb, this object by appropriate signs, my meaning is at once understood.—My pupil has never known the meaning of the word "power." I speak it, and bid him observe the motion of my lips; or I write it, and bid him mark the different letters which compose it: in either case, its import is completely hidden from him. But I portray by his own expressive language of signs a huge rock, and a mighty man lifting this rock and hurling it on his antagonist, and then tell him that *this* is power, and he comprehends me. How shall I give him the import of the word "admiration?" I describe by signs a lofty edifice, I raise one stone upon another to a great height, I adorn it with all the magnificence and beauty of architecture, I describe myself as approaching it, I look at it, I portray my feelings in my countenance, and by the position of my body and the motions of my hands, I ask him, "Did you ever feel so?" "Yes." "Well, this is admiration."

I am anxious to lay the foundation of his moral and religious instruction; and before I can proceed, he must become familiar with the import of the terms "good and evil." Yesterday I saw him angry with his companion; I recall the circumstances of the scene by appropriate signs; I portray the emotion of anger in my

countenance. I point to himself as having indulged the same emotion in his own breast. With a look of inquiry, and expressing by my features and gestures the marks of approbation, I demand whether in that state of feeling he deserved approbation. His conscience furnishes the reply, and he shakes his head. I tell him that state of feeling was "evil." I refer to some common acquaintance with whom we are very familiar; I imitate by my looks and gestures his peculiar kindness of deportment. I describe one act of this kindness which my pupil witnessed. Again, I inquire if this deserved approbation. He assents, and I tell him such a state of feeling was "good."

I might multiply examples of this kind without number, all of which would go to prove, that it is impossible, from the very nature of the case, to teach the deaf and dumb the import of any word except through the medium of *signs*. It is true that so far as the meaning of words can be communicated by definitions, so far the pupil may learn by this help; but then the words which compose the definition must have previously been explained by signs. To prevent mistakes, I ought, perhaps, before this to have observed, that by signs I mean, not any alphabet on the fingers, which is as purely arbitrary as either written or spoken language; but all that can be expressed by the various changes of the countenance, attitudes of the body and limbs, delineation of visible objects by the hands, and all the varieties of pictures and paintings. And this language of signs is significant, copious, perspicuous, and precise, to a degree which I believe would surprise any one who devotes attention enough to become familiar with it. It describes, with more rapidity and accuracy than written or spoken language, every object which is ad-

dressed immediately to any one of the bodily senses. It portrays with a peculiar vividness and beauty all scenes and transactions which are presented solely to the eye. In truth, my mind has been more agitated by a description of the day of judgment, which I have seen my ingenious friend Mr. —, who, you know, is deaf and dumb, exhibit in his own native language of signs, than by the loftiest flights of eloquence, which are to be found in the pages of Massillon or Bossuet. He was the judge, and I trembled before him. He was the accepted disciple of Christ, and I almost felt the rapture which the "Come ye blessed" will inspire. He was the impenitent sinner, and I shuddered with horror at the yawning gulph beneath his feet.

Language is but the excitement which gives imagination its force, and memory its power. Signs are as capable of doing this as well under one shape as another; because their use is predicated entirely on the supposition that the *thing* signified is *previously known*. Make out an analysis of any term whatever, and resolve it into its radical meaning; in other words, ascertain the *simple ideas* which form the complex one which it denotes. The simple ideas are either derived from sensation or reflection, either from what the mind notices through the organs of the body, or from what with its own intellectual eye it discovers to be its own phenomena.

Now *all* these *simple ideas* can most easily be expressed by the signs of the deaf and dumb; and hence it is that by a suitable arrangement and combination of these signs, there is no term physical, intellectual, or moral which they cannot express.

It is only some months since that I witnessed an interview of several hours between my deaf and dumb friend Mr. — and a young Chinese, who was quite ignorant of the English language, and also of the language of signs and gestures. Mr.

— began to talk to him in his language of signs. The Chinese was at first lost in amazement; but not one half hour had elapsed before a rapid conversation ensued between them, in which Mr. — ascertained many interesting circumstances respecting the birthplace, parentage, occupation, and life of the stranger, and also learned the import of nearly twenty Chinese words, some of which denoted quite complex and abstract ideas.

A few days since, a deaf and dumb man, of thirty years of age, visited me. He came from a distance, and was intirely ignorant of written language. I soon ascertained all the important circumstances of his situation in life. I then attempted to ask him, by precisely the same signs which I use among my pupils, if he knew any thing of the spirituality and immortality of the soul. He said his wife had taught him: he pointed to his body, and then to the grave; he breathed and drew as it were his breath from his mouth with his hand, and said it would go upwards.—I pray with my pupils morning and evening by signs. This man was present at our devotions. During one of my prayers I described by signs the influence of the Spirit of God in cleansing the heart. The succeeding day he referred to our evening prayer; and "what did you mean," said he, "by washing your heart?" I explained it to him by signs, and he seemed well to comprehend me. He conversed without the least difficulty with the other pupils on all common subjects, and told me one day, that one of them did not understand the truth that God sees every thing. This he did by forming a ball with his hand. Then he told me, stretching his look and other hand to a great distance, and in various directions, that his clenched hand represented the world.—Then he pointed upwards, and described some one as looking down upon this ball, and as look-

ing through it, and round it, and seeing every part of it.

From these remarks I derive one simple conclusion, that more instruction can be communicated to the deaf and dumb, in a *given space* of time, through the medium of signs, than by any other means. If, then, the cultivation of the powers of the intellect and the affections of the heart, so that the one may be led to *love* truth after the other has *apprehended* it, be the grand aim of all correct systems of education; it would seem that the principal object towards which the efforts of an instructor of the deaf and dumb should be directed, ought to be the cultivation of the language of signs, and the use of it in his daily intercourse with his pupils.

Just so much time, therefore, as is employed in teaching the deaf and dumb to attempt to articulate, is comparatively lost: for it affords to their minds no new acquisitions of thought; it only furnishes them with *one* additional way of communicating their ideas; and if the same time and immense labour were expended upon their instruction in new ideas, by the language of signs, they would make much more rapid progress in the attainment of knowledge.

This language of signs is capable of a beautiful though complicated philosophical arrangement; and much as some of the English critics have censured the Abbé Sicard's system of signs as unnecessarily prolix, and savouring too much of metaphysical subtlety, I am satisfied, from my actual application of it to the minds of the deaf and dumb, that it is founded in nature, and that its general principles correspond, with an admirable exactness, to those laws of the human mind, which have of late been so ably developed and defended by one whose name *alone* I need mention, Dugald Stewart, to revive in the breast of every lover of true philosophy the most profound

Christ. Observ. No 214.

admiration of exalted talents, and the most grateful remembrance of those talents adorned, in their exercise, with that simplicity, and candour, and modesty which always attend real greatness of soul.

As this language of signs is capable of becoming a vehicle of all important religious truth, and as this truth can thus be communicated to the deaf and dumb long before they are able to read and write the English language correctly; another powerful reason is thus furnished for its cultivation and use. I find no difficulty, in the course of eighteen months, in conveying to the mind of an intelligent pupil all the essential doctrines and important facts of the sacred Scriptures, and of conversing on all the common topics of Christian experience. It is found, too, to be quite practicable to conduct the morning and evening devotions of the family by mere signs. Our prayers are extemporaneous, with a short pause between each petition, which affords the pupils, who stand around the organ of their communication with Heaven, an opportunity of offering up mentally what is thus distinctly addressed to their understanding through the medium of sight.

Insulated as they are from all the rest of mankind, they can, thus, soon have the Gospel proclaimed to them; and if the salvation of the soul is an object paramount to all others, it should seem, that in all institutions for the instruction of the deaf and dumb, no time should be lost in pursuing such a method of communication, as will *the soonest* enable the teacher to make the interesting subjects of his care acquainted with the consoling doctrines of the pardon of sin through the blood of Jesus Christ.

I will only add, that this consideration should deeply engage the attention of all who are concerned in the management and instruction of asylums for the deaf and dumb; for

their responsibility is great indeed. I shall take an early opportunity of adding a few further remarks on the subject of teaching oral language to

the deaf and dumb, by way of reply to the sentiments of one of your correspondents in your Number for December, 1818. G.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Tales of the Hall. By the Rev. GEORGE CRABBE, LL.B. In two volumes. pp. xxiv, 326, and 353. London: Murray. 1819.

IN the cursory survey, to which we are annually invited, of the laudable and sometimes splendid display of British genius in the exhibition of pictures at Somerset House, we strongly participate in the pleasure very generally felt at being directed to some new production, from the inimitable pencil of our modern genius, Mr. Wilkie. We have noticed, in succession, his admirable and close delineation of the Blind Fidler, the Rent Day, the Card-players, &c.; and no fresh effort of this truly spirited and exact, though characteristically low-life, painter, has induced those feelings of satiety in our gaping mood, which we consider it the first privilege of the true artist *never* to produce.

It is with feelings not very dissimilar, that we hear, amidst the often splendid trash which exhibits itself for daily or monthly inspection in the scribbling world, of another set of tales and delineations, from the pen of our able and faithful copyist of nature in her lowly forms, the Rev. George Crabbe. As readers of poetry, we still own to the magic power held over our minds by nearly the same manner, and quite the same original force, in the present delineations of life and manners, with those which rivetted us on former occasions: and the judgment that has thrown an interval of seven years between the present and the last effusions of this satiric muse, has se-

cured to us quite a sufficiency of novelty, at least in matter if not in style, to renew all the interest which we felt in its first productions. The question, indeed, whether this highly successful portrayer of almost the *only* subjects he professes to choose for the exercise of his art, be in truth a poet or not, seems to us to be just as moot a point as whether the aforesaid artist, Mr. Wilkie, be a painter or not. We have very much mistaken the meaning of the latter term, if it is to be confined to the Raffaellies, the Rubenses, the Wests, the Davids, and other *epic composers*, whether of ancient or modern times: and if the term poet belong only to a Homer, or a Tasso, a Milton, or a Southey, we shall require another edition of Johnson's poets, and must lash the memory of that great critic, for having inscribed amongst his worthies the names of a Butler, a Churchill, or even a Dryden, and a Pope. If by the force of vivid conceptions, aided by the magic of an artificial and harmonious diction, to raise strong emotions, whether of pity, fear, desire, or hate towards persons, or at events with which we are conscious of no immediate and direct concern, be the very essence and genuine effect of all true poetry, however otherwise technically defined; then must the above last mentioned names, and Mr. Crabbe's with them, be admitted to the full freedom of the Pierian band: and though it may not have been the fortune or genius of this or that man to raise exactly this or that class of sensations, in the imaginative faculties of their readers, yet the power of raising any strong sensations of

whatever kind, pleasing or displeasing, by such methods, must be considered as equally entitling the exercise of that power to the dignified name of poetic genius.

One class of sensations, it is most true, our popular modern poet Mr. Crabbe does not raise, nor even profess an attempt to raise, in the breast of his readers. It is one of which, considering his very strong mind and great superiority in another department of poetry, we should almost hesitate in averring, what is, notwithstanding, our belief, that he is completely destitute in his own soul; at least destitute to a degree surprisingly beyond the ordinary run of the "irritable tribe" whom he so much surpasses in his peculiar way. To the feelings of the genuine and lofty *epic*, we must pronounce our decided opinion that Mr. Crabbe is, as a writer, wholly insensible. To explain, in two words, what we mean by the term "epic" or "heroic," we should state, that whatever is above life, above ordinary life, as experienced in our quotidian intercourse with our fellow-beings, may be ranked under that title. Great powers, great virtues, even great vices, and great sufferings may all be considered as the proper objects of the epic feeling.—The greatness of the object seems to communicate itself to, or rather to derive itself from, a corresponding sentiment in the mind of the poet. It appears as much in the character he draws, as in the numbers of his song: and there is in the whole matter and method of his discourse, such a lofty aspiring, such a stately march, such a splendid, and sometimes scarcely measured, ambition of thought and expression, that, except for a felicity which the pagans might well call inspiration, the heroic inventor is in hourly danger of out-reaching his aim, and toppling over into the sublimely ridiculous.

"But not to one in this benighted age
Is that diviner inspiration giv'n,
Which shone in Shakespear's and in
Milton's page—
The pomp and prodigality of Heav'n."

To this inspiration, if Mr. Crabbe possesses not the slightest claim, he has at least the merit of not advancing any. Like his fellow-satirist, he has chosen, by profession, "to expatiate over" the humbler, but, perhaps, more appropriate, "field of man:" he has chosen by his writings to awaken chiefly those sensations which arise in reading Pope's *Satirical Letters*, his *Dunciad*, and other essays of a like nature; and if that great poet is only to be called such in his *Messiah*, *Windsor Forest*, *Epistles*, or *Rape of the Lock*, then, indeed, Mr. Crabbe must renounce any participation with him in that name: and the only question that will further remain is this, Would Mr. Pope himself have chosen to rest his title to poetic fame on any one species of his own composition, to the exclusion of the rest?

That Mr. Crabbe does claim, at least, so much as the name of poet, will be seen in his own preface to his former work, the "*Tales*;" and to that very rational and spirited preface we shall content ourselves with referring such of our readers as may, after accompanying us through the present work, "*the Tales of the Hall*," still retain an opinion, that they furnish inadequate evidence of his title to that high and distinguished name.

So far, indeed, has Mr. Crabbe chosen to rest his honourable claims, on grounds totally distinct from *epic* composition, that he has gone beyond all his predecessors of name and note to whom we might have referred, in rejecting the very front or colour of that ambitious style. With much ability for the regular heroic march of song, and no lack, we should presume, of resources from whence to draw his "*sesquipedalia verba*," we find him, we might almost say, forc-

ing himself to reject those which come ready to his hand, and descending, even by unnatural efforts, from his loftiest measures to that "*sermo pedestris*" which he seems determined to make the grand characteristic of all his writings. Hence not only are his openings most ordinarily in that low and *chatty* sort of language, which goes quite beyond the prudent modesty recommended by the great Roman critic in the first steppings of his heroic muse; but even in the mid-height of his career, when the native force of his mind seems instinctively to have lashed him into something of the nobler darings of thought and style, he takes care to let us know, before he finishes his sentence, how much he despises the praise at which we fancied he was aspiring, and ends not uncommonly the finest passage with an effect not unlike that of a race-horse who flings a shoe at the last heat, or an alderman who finishes a luxurious feast by breaking with his last morsel an unsound tooth. Instances will, we are persuaded, frequently occur, in the course of the many quotations we shall have to give from the volumes before us, of this quaint and unaccountable taste: unaccountable perhaps on any ground, but that of supposing our poet afraid of the slightest imputation, of what might be termed in any sense of the word enthusiastic; desirous of keeping his head perfectly cool, and shewing it to be so amidst scenes the most qualified to arouse the liveliest sensations of the soul; and perhaps acting upon the questionable principle of a forcible contrast, in which the careless and familiar attitude of the poet himself should set off the growing and the deepening effects, lights and shadows, of the picture before him.

We think it necessary to say thus much on the style of our author, because we may be considered in some measure as patrons of it,

whilst we quote, with more or less approbation, passages of the deepest interest and greatest merit on other grounds; and that we may be saved, likewise, the trouble of referring to such comparatively minor defects, when we may feel ourselves called upon to detract from our critical and poetic praise, by some more serious considerations of a moral and religious nature. These considerations will naturally arise in the progress of our review; but at present we are unwilling to detain our readers further from the *Tales* themselves, or to suspend the varied interest which they are calculated to excite, in every breast not wholly dead to those peculiar feelings of sympathy with the vices, weaknesses, and sufferings of mankind, which Mr. Crabbe knows so well how to touch.

The "*Tales of the Hall*" so far depart from the author's previous plans, as to stand in a sort of connexion with one another throughout the whole, by means of a preliminary tale not deficient in interest, which runs its thread along the entire texture of the piece. Whether he thinks such a plan may give a little more the appearance of original invention than the former disjointed method he had pursued, or whether a little more pains, or a little more aptitude in his materials, or a little more experience, persuaded and directed him to that regularity of composition which he had acknowledged on a former occasion beyond his reach, certain it is that he has conformed himself in this instance, more to the generally recognised mode of all superior tale-bearers, from Boccaccio downwards, through the illustrious undertaker of a *Thousand and One Stories* to form the amusement of as many nights for the Arabian tyrant, to the final splendors of our new and modish, rather than moral, poet of Lallah Rook. The device has its merit, though not worth much cost of time or pains. We forget

who tells the tale, if the tale itself is worth our hearing. The persons relating, if remarkably amiable or remarkably romantic, or any otherwise remarkably interesting, perhaps a little take off from our close and undivided attention to the wonders they are telling. The improbability, moreover, continually strikes us of so many marvellous occurrences having come under the cognizance of any one or two persons, however conversant with "the varied scenes of crowded life." A poem which is, after all, nothing but a congeries of episodes, can scarcely be called, by any Aristotelian disciple, a regular composition. And if the tales be considered as a series of interesting dramas, and the relaters of them the actors, it cannot add much interest or effect to the several pieces, to know the character of the players: this has a large family, that has a country box, this is a decent man, that a profligate, &c.

However, be this as it may, the Hall into which our author introduces us to find the enactors of his Tales, must be described to our readers as we find it in his opening book, with its new possessor, the brother George, just

"past his threescore years,
A busy actor, swayed by hopes and fears
Of powerful kind; and he had filled the
parts
That try our strength and agitate our
hearts."

He was not married; but having been crossed in some rash early affection, he had, after a life of active business, retired to his native village to pass a contemplative and green old age, with money enough to purchase, and health enough to enjoy, an old mansion, the object of his admiration in earlier years, but scarcely of his highest dreams of future ambition.

"It was an ancient, venerable hall,
And once surrounded by a moat and wall;

A part was added by a 'squire of taste,
Who, while unvalued acres ran to waste,
Made spacious rooms, whence he could
look about,
And mark improvements as they rose with-
out:
He fill'd the moat, he took the wall away,
He thinn'd the park, and bade the view be
gay:
The scene was rich; but he who should
behold
Its worth was poor, and so the whole was
sold.

"Just then our merchant from his desk re-
tired,
And made the purchase that his heart de-
sired;
The Hall of Binning, his delight a boy,
That gave his fancy in her flight employ:
Here, from his father's modest home, he
gazed,
Its grandeur charm'd him, and its height
amazed:
Work of past ages; and the brick built
place
Where he resided was in much disgrace;
But never in his fancy's proudest dream
Did he the master of that mansion seem:
Young was he then, and little did he know
What years on care and diligence bestow;
Now young no more, retired to views well
known,
He finds that object of his awe his own;
The Hall at Binning!—how he loves the
gloom
That sun-excluding window gives the
room;
Those broad brown stairs on which he loves
to tread;
Those beams within; without, that length
of lead,
On which the names of wanton boys ap-
pear,
Who died old men, and left memorials
here,
Carvings of feet and hands, and knots and
flowers,
The fruits of busy minds in idle hours.

"Here, while our 'squire the modern part
possess'd,
His partial eye upon the old would rest;
That best his comforts gave—this sooth'd
his feelings best." Vol. I. pp. 5, 6.

The words in Italics are, if not a strong, yet some illustration of our meaning, in commenting on that free-
will insertion of low colloquialism
with which our author chooses per-
petually to dash his most interesting

passages; a mixture which, for our own part, we think by no means necessary to keep up that perfectly easy and natural flow that Mr. Crabbe, when he pleases, can so well combine with much grace and harmony of language.

The Hall thus graphically described has a visiter, in the person of Richard, younger and half-brother to George its possessor. The portraiture of the guest is worked with no common care; and his free and engaging manners, with much of a liberal cast of mind, and certain early free-thinking habits, now sobered down by the well tried, and well beloved services of a wise and affectionate wife, are admirably drawn. His habits had been as wandering as George's were fixed; and though George had been the first driven from home by his mother's partiality for her second husband and last born Richard, yet Richard is now glad, after the death of the mother and years of wandering, to accept his brother's late invitation to the Hall; with a natural but honourable view to the benefit of his numerous family, and accompanied with a determination strongly expressed in the following *soliloquizing* address.

“Well! here I am; and, brother, take
you heed,
I am not come to flatter you and feed;
You shall no soother, fawner, hearer find,
I will not brush your coat, nor smooth your
mind;
I will not hear your tales the whole day
long,
Nor swear you're right if I believe you
wrong:
Nor be a witness of the facts you state,
Nor as my own adopt your love or hate;
I will not earn my dinner when I dine,
By taking all your sentiments for mine;
Nor watch the guiding motions of your eye,
Before I venture question or reply;
Nor when you speak affect an awe profound,
Sinking my voice, as if I fear'd the sound;
Nor to your looks obediently attend,
The poor, the humble, the dependent
friend;

Yet son of that dear mother could I meet—
But lo! the mansion—'tis a fine old seat!"
Vol. I. pp. 17, 18.

The chief of their company is the rector of the parish, "social and shrewd," in whom George found an old school-fellow, and now at once a neighbour and friend.

"Boys on one form they parted, now to
meet
In equal state, their worships on one seat."

By his help, certain recollections of school supply the opening remarks and tales in the second and third books, of which the tale in the third book, of "the Patronized Boy," is not exceeded in the whole work for strength of shade, and the portraiture of unmingled despair.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth books relate, from the lips of the brother Richard, the various incidents of his own chequered life, and receive a deep interest respectively, from the description of his first trip at sea, in which he has a narrow, not to say miraculous, escape *after* drowning;—from the interesting story of "poor Ruth," the daughter of his friendly hostess in the sea port, who dies self-drowned, the hapless victim of seduction and a press-gang;—and from the really *charmingly* conducted courtship, between Richard and the daughter of a vicar-host, his fair, and faithful, and beloved Matilda.* The following book, the seventh, receives its interest from the shorter, but not less interesting egotism of

* We perceive in certain scenes of this (like all others) *chequered* courtship, some resemblance to those, on a similar occasion, detailed with very great humour in the "Lover's Journey," one of the "Tales" published by Mr. Crabbe in 1812. The comparatively narrow walk of invention and thought, adopted by our homely poet, cannot fail of leading to many strong resemblances of this kind, though, we must add, none occur to detract from the novelty always due to the public in a new production.

the brother George, who has to relate his disappointment in love, which gives rise to an adventure as amusing in the commencement as it is revolting at the close; and affords a curious specimen of the poet's mind, in mixing together, with apparently so slight an invasion of his own tranquillity, scenes at once the most ludicrous and most tragical, the most pure and most deformed. After these home relations, it begins to appear that neighbouring on the Hall, or at no great distance from it, there are a very considerable number of persons resident, of the most diversified characters and manifold lots and adventures in life, who are successively brought forward to view, either in the walks or rides, or the after-dinner cozings of the two brothers. Of these, the lamentable tale of "the Sisters," ruined by the attentions and the grapes of a broken banker; the disappointments of "the Preceptor Husband" of a stupid wife; the self-related woes of "the Old Bachelor," who comes to dinner to tell his own tale; and the corresponding "Maid's Story," as recited from her own clean and well-turned manuscript, constitute respectively the four last books of the first volume.

The second volume opens with the triumphs and defeats of amorous revenge, in the interesting and highly wrought tale, related by the rector, of Sir Owen Dale. The second tale, filling the thirteenth book, proves in the dilatory and changeable loves of the frail Henry, that "delay has danger." The next book informs us of "the natural Death of Love," in a very pretty discourse, penned by Richard himself, between Henry and Emma, who prove at last, that the love of married folks, though buried for a time, may not be without a pleasing resurrection. The sweets of a connexion commenced in folly, continued through artifice, and consummated at "Gretna Green," form

the next book. And the following (the sixteenth) relates the wonders of "Lady Barbara, or the Ghost." Three other personages, in the neighbourhood, form the subjects respectively of the three next books; of which "the Widow," still pretty, after the disruption of her three-fold knot, is the most amusing; "Ellen," the most provokingly sad and disappointing;* and "William Bailey," affording the liveliest series of incident, carried through the heights of love in a cottage, and the depths of vice in a great house below-stairs. A sufficiently dull story succeeds, in book twenty, of "a Cathedral Walk," with sundry remarks on ghosts, and at the end an appropriate and laughable mistake, by a romantic maid, of a resurrection-man for a pure and sainted apparition. A more touching and truly tragical scene, or rather drama, succeeds, in the twenty-first book, in connexion with the portentous subject of "Smugglers and Poachers." And, finally, the closing book brings us back to our "two Brothers," and after a very decently managed state of sentimental suspense, in which Richard's characteristic nicety of feeling and delicacy of honour betray him into some natural mistakes, respecting his brother's intentions and the worthy Rector Jacques's sentiments of friendship, and even his Matilda's tenderness towards him, the whole matter is closed in the following happy *denouement* from the lips of the homely but honest and fraternal George, on the very morning of Richard's looked-for departure.

* It is a curious fact, and might lead to some curious speculations on the difference between fiction and truth, that the story of Ellen, decidedly the most inexplicable, and that of Lady Barbara's Ghost, nearly the most dull and unmeaning in the volumes before us, are acknowledged in the preface as not original inventions, and actually communicated by friends, as true stories, we presume, or "founded on truth."

"No! I would have thee, brother, all my own,
To grow beside me as my trees have grown;
For ever near me, pleasant in my sight,
And in my mind, my pride and my delight.

"Yet will I tell thee, Richard; had I found
Thy mind dependent and thy heart unsound,
Hadst thou been poor, obsequious, and disposed
With any wish or measure to have closed,
Willing on me and gladly to attend,
The younger brother, the convenient friend;
Thy speculation its reward had made
Like other ventures—thou hadst gain'd in trade:
What reason urged, or Jacques esteem'd thy due,
Thine had it been, and I, a trader too,
Had paid my debt, and home my brother sent,
Nor glad nor sorry that he came or went;
Who to his wife and children would have told,
They had an uncle, and the man was old;
Till every girl and boy had learn'd to prate
Of uncle George, his gout, and his estate.

"Thus had we parted; but as now thou art,
I must not lose thee—No! I cannot part;
Is it in human nature to consent,
To give up all the good that Heaven has lent,
All social ease and comfort to forego,
And live again the solitary? No!

"We part no more, dear Richard! thou wilt need
Thy brother's help to teach thy boys to read;
And I should love to hear Matilda's psalm,
To keep my spirit in a morning calm,
And feel the soft devotion that prepares
The soul to rise above its earthly cares;
Then thou and I, an independent two,
May have our parties, and defend them too;
Thy liberal notions, and my loyal fears,
Will give us subjects for our future years;
We will for truth alone contend and read,
And our good Jacques shall oversee our creed." Vol. II. pp. 347—349.

A convenient purchase of brick and mortar, wood, and garden, lately made by George and inspected by both, furnishes the final scene.

"It is my brother's!"—

"No!" [George] answers, "No! 'Tis to thy own possession that we go; It is thy wife's, and will thy children's be, Earth, wood, and water!—all for thine and thee;
Bought in thy name—Alight my friend, and come,
I do beseech thee, to thy proper home;
There wilt thou soon thy own Matilda view:
She knows our deed, and she approves it too;
Before her all our views and plans were laid,
And Jacques was there to explain and to persuade.
Here, on this lawn, thy boys and girls shall run,
And play their gambols when their tasks are done;
There, from that window, shall their mother view
The happy tribe, and smile at all they do;
While thou, more gravely, hiding thy delight,
Shalt cry "O! childish!" and enjoy the sight."

"And hear me, Richard! if I should offend,
Assume the patron, and forget the friend;
If ought in word or manner I express
That only touches on thy happiness;
If I be peevish, humorsome, unkind,
Spoil'd as I am by each subservient mind;
For I am humour'd by a tribe who make
Me more capricious for the pains they take
To make me quiet; shouldst thou ever feel
A wound for this, this leave not time to heal,
But let thy wife her cheerful smile withhold;
Let her be civil, distant, cautious, cold;
Then shall I woo forgiveness, and repent,
Nor bear to lose the blessings Heaven has lent." Vol. II. pp. 351—353.

Without attempting any thing further in the way of an account of the contents of these, we must call them, volumes of true poetic merit, as most readers have probably ascertained, from personal acquaintance, before now; we shall proceed to such few, but free, observations on particular parts, and on the whole performance, as have occurred to us in the perusal. To these observations a passage in Mr. Crabbe's own sprightly preface may, perhaps, afford us a convenient *text*. It is as follows:—

“The first intention of the poet must be to please; for, if he means to instruct, he must render the instruction which he hopes to convey palatable and pleasant. I will not assume the tone of a moralist, nor promise that my relations shall be beneficial to mankind; but I have endeavoured, not unsuccessfully I trust, that, in whatsoever I have related or described, there should be nothing introduced which has a tendency to excuse the vices of man, by associating with them sentiments that demand our respect, and talents that compel our admiration. There is nothing in these pages which has the mischievous effect of confounding truth and error, or confusing our ideas of right and wrong.” p. xviii.

Now the questions which arise to our minds from this passage, and on which we found our observations, are these three:—Does Mr. Crabbe please us? Does he instruct us? Does he rightly define the first duty of the poet as being to please, or properly disclaim the assumption that his relations shall be beneficial to mankind?

To the first of these questions we say, that the word “please” must be taken in a large sense, in order to answer it, on the present occasion, in the affirmative. If the test of pleasure conferred be the general desire to purchase and to read, then Mr. Crabbe wants nothing further to prove that he is a *pleasing* poet; since we know no poet more generally read, or made more frequently the topic of interesting and animated

conversation. But when we listen to the remarks no less frequently recurring in the course of such conversations; and when we look into the pages of our brother critics, whether of greater or humbler note, and find so many persons literally writhing under the horrors of the song, and gasping after terms to express their shocked and severely pained feelings, at many of the ideas lastingly impressed on their brain; it certainly conveys to us the notion of something the very contrary to pleasure, and we begin to think our worthy divine has failed in “the first intention of the poet.” We hear, indeed, of the eagerness with which auditors will rush into the stuffed theatre, to have their sensibilities harrowed by the adventures of a Lear, or a Macbeth; and this, we are still told, is being “pleased.” But even here there are limits; and the Athenians of old, those most determined play-goers, were for hanging the poet who cruelly and unjustly murdered his hero. We know, too, that people will crowd to an execution; nay, we doubt not we should have multitudes of “pleased” spectators, were they admissible into the surgery or dissecting room; and yet we apprehend neither the hangman nor the surgeon would be ranked amongst the tribe of those whose “first intention is to please.” Mr. Crabbe is a fine dissector: his moral knife lays open to universal gaze, with a firm and unshaken touch, and in horrible truth and fidelity, the breathing vitals, the *spirantia exta* of his victims. The mental sufferings he seems to take a delight in portraying are often worked up with a poignancy that would leave the very cruellest spectator, a Domitian himself, or a French mob, nothing more to desire; and when pursued, as it is occasionally, to the death of the unhappy sufferer, can any thing more nearly approach

the *merit* of the before-mentioned unfortunate Athenian poet? Take, for instance, the following death-bed scene of the poor "Patronized Boy."

"He then was sitting on a workhouse-bed,
And on the naked boards reclined his head,
Around were children with incessant cry,
And near was one, like him, about to die:
A broken chair's deal bottom held the store
That he required—he soon would need no
more;

A yellow tea-pot, standing at his side,
From its half spout the cold black tea supplied.

"Hither, it seem'd, the fainting man was
brought,
Found without food—it was no longer
sought:

For his employers knew not whom they
paid,
Nor where to seek him whom they wish'd
to aid:

Here brought, some kind attendant he address'd,
And sought some trifles which he yet possess'd;

Then named a lightless closet, in a room
Hired at small rate, a garret's deepest
gloom:

They sought the region, and they brought
him all

That he his own, his proper wealth, could
call:

A better coat, less pierced; some linen neat,
Not whole; and papers, many a valued sheet;
Designs and drawings; these at his desire,
Were placed before him at the chamber fire,
And while th' admiring people stood to
gaze,

He, one by one, committed to the blaze,
Smiling in spleen; but one he held awhile,
And gave it to the flames, and could not
smile.

"The sickening man—for such appear'd
the fact—

Just in his need, would not a debt contract;
But left his poor apartment for the bed
That earth might yield him, or some way-
side shed;

Here he was found, and to this place convey'd,

Where he might rest, and his last debt be
paid:

Fame was his wish, but he so far from fame,

That no one knew his kindred, or his name,
Or by what means he liv'd, or from what
place he came.

"Poor Charles! unnoticed by thy titled
friend,

Thy days had calmly past, in peace thine
end:

Led by thy patron's vanity astray,
Thy own misled thee in thy trackless way,
Urging thee on by hope absurd and vain,
Where never peace or comfort smiled
again!

"Once more I saw him, when his spirits
fail'd,

And my desire to aid him then prevail'd;
He shew'd a softer feeling in his eye,
And watch'd my looks, and own'd the sym-
pathy:

'Twas now the calm of wearied pride; so
long

As he had strength was his resentment
strong,

But in such place, with strangers all
around,

And they such strangers, to have some-
thing found

Allied to his own heart, an early friend,
One, only one, who would on him attend,
To give and take a look! at this his jour-
ney's end;

One link, however slender, of the chain
That held him where he could not long re-
main;

The one sole interest!—No, he could not
now

Retain his anger; Nature knew not how;
And so there came a softness to his mind,
And he forgave the usage of mankind.

His cold long fingers now were press'd to
mine,

And his faint smile of kinder thoughts gave
sign;

His lips moved often as he tried to lend
His words their sound, and softly whis-
per'd "friend!"

Not without comfort in the thought ex-
press'd

By that calm look with which he sank to
rest." Vol. I. pp. 49—52.

We really felt grateful for the
small measure of relief afforded to
our wounded feelings, by the last
exquisitely-wrought paragraph; but

our impression, upon rising from "the Patronized Boy," we must bluntly own, on the whole, was far enough from that of being "pleased." From ten to twelve of Mr. Crabbe's two and twenty books would afford materials for the deepest tragedies. The comparative languor of some other of the books which exhibit endeavours of an opposite description, leave us little doubt as to the style of thought most congenial to the author's own peculiar mind. We desire, however, here to speak with very large exceptions in Mr. Crabbe's favour; as we hesitate not to affirm, that some of the most pleasing descriptions of domestic happiness, and the bosom's joy, to be found any where in the language, may be traced in this author's pages. His playful efforts, likewise, or rather his playfully satirical efforts, are occasionally very happy and truly amusing. Of this the comely "Widow," in the seventeenth book, whose "thrice-slain peace" had scarcely left a wrinkle on her brow, may be adduced as an excellent specimen, with all her pretty wayward infantile fancies; save and except that these also were the death, and a cruel one, of her first ruined husband!

"Water was near them, and, her mind
afloat,
The lady saw a cottage and a boat,
And thought what sweet excursions they
might make,
How they might sail, what neighbours they
might take.
And nicely would she deck the lodge upon
the lake."

Many of his windings up at last, have the merit of allaying a small portion of the irritated feelings produced by the substance of the story, and seem intended to act as a sort of entertainment after the horrors of the piece; but we must add, they generally come in too late to our assistance, are too short, and fail by scarcely forming any constituent

part of the drama. On the whole, we sum up our sentence on this head, by declaring our opinion, that Mr. Crabbe is not, as he stands at present *in the piece*, a pleasing poet; that his great power and constant inclination lie in portraying all the varied feelings and shadows, deeper and deeper still of wo and vice; but that he gives a sufficient indication of his power in an opposite manner to make us covet, and even demand as our right, some more pleasing and animating pictures from his pen—some pictures which may, without deviating from truth, exhibit her in her fairer forms and more inviting colours. We assign, it is true, a more arduous task to our poet than any he has yet attempted, as beauty is more difficult of delineation than deformity, and the simple magnificence of wisdom and virtue and truth and peace, in their purest earthly forms, more unattainable to the ordinary pencil, than the harsh, and wrinkled, and ever-shifting features of falsehood and folly, and vice and wretchedness: but why should not the attempt be made, with powers of genius like those of Mr. Crabbe?

The next question which demands our attention, and a very grave one, is this—Does Mr. Crabbe instruct us? To this we most readily reply, in spite of his own modest disclaimer, which we reserve as a dry question for our last topic, that it is his laudable intention to do so. We as firmly believe, that Mr. Crabbe intends to benefit mankind by his labours as to please them; and *if* he fails, or as *far* as he fails in either, we have no hesitation in ascribing both alike, rather to error in judgment than to any perversity of will. The points of instruction in which we perceive no failure in our poet's able productions, are, 1. That nice delineation of character in general, as far as *his* characters go, which must ever be considered as highly

conducive to the cultivation of that discriminative faculty which is so useful in our intercourse with mankind; and, 2. and near akin to this, The perpetual recurrence of inimitable home-strokes in the course even of his commonest details, which go very far in assisting us to form a correct judgment of our own minds and our own motives. As an instance of the former, what can be more in point, or more admirably discriminating, than the following portion of the respective characters of "the Two Sisters," Jane and Lucy?

"Lucy loved all that grew upon the ground,
And loveliness in all things living found:
The gilded fly, the fern upon the wall,
Were nature's works, and admirable all.
Pleased with indulgence of so cheap a kind,
Its cheapness never discomposed her mind.

"Jane had no liking for such things as these,
Things pleasing her must her superiors please;
The costly flower was precious in her eyes,
That skill can vary, or that money buys;
Her taste was good, but she was still afraid,
Till fashion sanction'd the remarks she made.

"The sisters read, and Jane with some delight,
The satires keen that fear or rage excite,
That men in power attack, and ladies high,
And give broad hints that we may know them by.
She was amused when sent to haunted rooms,
Or some dark passage where the spirit comes
Of one once murder'd! Then she laughing read,
And felt at once the folly and the dread:
As rustic girls to crafty gipsies fly,
And trust the liar though they fear the lie,
Or as a patient, urged by grievous pains,
Will see the daring quack whom he disdains,

So Jane was pleas'd to see the beckoning hand,
And trust the magic of the Ratcliffe-wand.

"In her religion—for her mind, though light,
Was not disposed our better views to slight—
Her favourite authors were a solemn kind,
Who fill with dark mysterious thoughts the mind;
And who with such conceits her fancy plied,
Became her friend, philosopher, and guide.

"She made the Progress of the Pilgrim one
To build a thousand pleasant views upon;
All that connects us with a world above
She loved to fancy, and she long'd to prove;
Well would the poet please her, who could lead
Her fancy forth, yet keep untouch'd her creed.

"Led by an early custom, Lucy spied
When she awaked, the Bible at her side:
That, ere she ventured on a world of care,
She might for trials, joys or pains prepare;
For every dart a shield, a guard for every snare.

"She read not much of high heroic deeds,
Where man the measure of man's power exceeds;
But gave to luckless love and fate severe
Her tenderest pity and her softest tear.

"She mix'd not faith with fable, but she trod
Right onward, cautious in the ways of God;
Nor did she dare to launch on seas unknown,
In search of truths by some adventurers shown,
But her own compass used, and kept a course her own."

Vol. I. pp. 179—181.

Instances of the latter point of instruction occur so frequently in Mr. Crabbe's pages, that it seems an injustice to select only one or two as specimens of the rest. Perhaps, however, the following fearful outline of a state of mind, as common as it is lamentable, may

not be without its use to whom it may concern.

" 'Tis said th' offending man will sometimes sigh,

And say, 'My God, in what a dream am I?
I will awake : ' but, as the day proceeds,
The weaken'd mind the day's indulgence
needs ;

Hating himself at every step he takes,
His mind approves the virtue he forsakes,
And yet forsakes her. O ! how sharp the
pain,

Our vice, ourselves, our habits to dis-
dain ;

To go where never yet in peace we went,
To feel our hearts can bleed, yet not re-
lent ;

To sigh, yet not recede ; to grieve, yet not
repent !" Vol. I. p. 57.

And take the following lucubrations of the *conscientious* Doctor on his daughter's expected trip to Gret-na Green.

" O ! that unknown to him the pair had
flown

To that same Green, the project all their
own !

And should they now be guilty of the act,
Am not I free from knowledge of the fact ?
Will they not, if they will ?—'Tis thus we
meet

The check of conscience, and our guide de-
feat." Vol. II. p. 125.

3. We consider Mr. Crabbe's writings beneficial, as a direct satire on some of the most common, and therefore, perhaps, most fatal errors which meet us in our ordinary plans of life, or general intercourse with mankind. In the early history of George, he gives us a hearty laugh at adult bachelor romance, that is, till he conducts to a scene of ghastly interest in the presence chamber of his actual intended, where a more distressing moral forces itself upon us, in descriptions scarcely *producibile* of the

" something he had seen
So pale and slim, and tawdry and unclean,
With haggard looks of vice and wo the
prey ;
Laughing in anger, miserably gay," &c.
&c. &c.

The arts of the seducer, the speculator, and such other vermin and pests of society, are exposed with a force which may be of much practical use ; the " righte pleasante storie" of two brothers falling murderously by each other's hands makes us equally hate the game laws and their breach, whilst the consequences of unguarded marriages, and the proper method of guarding any from disappointment, and guiding them to their truest and most lasting bliss, form perhaps one of the most frequent, varied, and most edifying admonitory results of the entire volumes before us. Of this latter head of instruction, " the Natural Death of Love," would afford us, had we time for more quotation, some very interesting specimens ; particularly the exquisite description of the married duties at the close. But we forbear ; and only add, that the tale, which occurs before, of Sir Owen Dale, one of the highest wrought, and most striking in the volume, gives us a very fine tragical lecture on the *moral* death of *Revenge* ; and whilst it inflicts a most heart-rending, but true poetical justice on an unhappy run-away wife and her paramour, presents one of the most touching examples of forgiveness in the husband ; so touching, as to overcome even the Shylock-heart of Sir Owen himself, and induce him to transfer his own lost bliss to his happier rival, or rather successor in love. In a word, we consider Mr. Crabbe as *in the main* poetically just : if his crimes are disgusting, it must be allowed that so likewise are his punishments, and we fully concede to him the merit of never " excusing the vices of man, by associating with them sentiments that demand our respect, and talents that compel our admiration."

Something, however, and indeed much remains to be said on the opposite side of the question, and we can-

not help offering rather a strong opinion, that Mr. Crabbe fails in the point of instruction in his poems in two or three very important ways. First of all, we think he errs in making so many of his examples purely negative, and presenting to us the large mass of mankind and woman-kind, as only to be scorned for their vices, and scarcely ever to be pitied for their manifold and deserved misfortunes. Aristotle, it is true, makes it the office of tragedy to purify the mind by pity and terror: and if Mr. Crabbe's heroes and heroines rose to a certain pitch of gigantic action, or sunk to any thing like a state of honourable misfortune, we fully allow such an advantage might follow.—But these are not the favoured objects of Mr. Crabbe's portraiture, which rather are a set of low, mean, pitiful, and scoundrel passions, the sordid offspring of pure selfishness, and the proper and fit cause of a debasing and squalid wretchedness, such as we look for in the dungeon, or shudder at in the hospital. His very virtues are of a creeping order; but his vices positively wallow in a kind of moral stench: and both indicate a something in our poor mortal frame even lower than our avowed and too lamentable frailty; a lowness that nothing can raise; a total incapacity for any thing great, generous, and godlike. We approve, because the Scriptures approve, every description of fallen human nature that shall make it, in its own proper worth and merit, “abominable,” and “none righteous; no, not one.” But we do not wish to see its capacities trampled; its high and noble destinies trampled in the dust: nor do we willingly behold even man in his worst estate as “less than the archangel ruined; and the excess of glory obscured.” We think ill both of the impression and the effect with which we rise from descriptions of human nature like many of Mr.

Crabbe's; an impression of the hatefulness of man, with the effect of scarcely wishing, because not hoping, to make him, by any efforts, better. How shockingly, indeed, must the fall of man not only have debased but annihilated his capacities, if this be really the case! how much changed from that primeval innocence and towering dignity of character!

“For contemplation He and valour
form'd—
For softness She and sweet attractive
grace.”

How much below the hopes and feelings once entertained towards him even in his fallen state! “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that every one that believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

And this, again, leads us to say, that in the pages of Mr. Crabbe, Christianity itself—we say it with pain—seems to us degraded from its high and privileged authority; and the pure and undefiled religion of Jesus Christ, more than once unfeelingly confounded with the most horrid and polluted mixtures, is almost at all times exposed as a totally insufficient antidote either to the ills or the vices of mankind. By a most sad and disheartening process, Mr. Crabbe seems to make his characters, for the most part, good at first, such as their goodness is, and bad afterwards; and it seems to us as if his works might not be inaptly titled, *The Triumphs of Vice*. Virtue, resolution, honour, conscience, which with him seem to have existed previously in the mind, are all chased away before the breath of temptation, like chaff before the wind: and, instead of tracing the gradual and glorious transitions from bad to good, from the first corruptions of nature to the happy improvements of Divine grace, through the medium of the first and purest of religions, we have

to view in Mr. Crabbe's pages the puny efforts of a spurious or low-born innocence of nature, gradually or hastily subsiding into the depths of a miserable and overwhelming depravity.

"Still there was virtue, but a rolling
stone

On a hill's brow is not more quickly gone :
The slightest motion ;—ceasing from our
care,—

A moment's absence,—when we're not
aware,—

When down it rolls, and at the bottom
lies,

Sunk, lost, degraded, never more to rise !
Far off the glorious height from whence it
fell,

With all things base and infamous to
dwell.

Friendship with woman is a dangerous
thing—

Thence hopes avow'd and bold confessions
spring :

Frailties confess'd to other frailties lead,
And new confessions new desires suc-
ceed ;

And, when the friends have thus their
hearts disclosed,

They find how little is to guilt opposed."
Vol. II. pp. 30; 31.

Who would have thought this dire foreboding of a future fall, to belong to the amiable and delightful vicar's niece in Sir Owen Dale, all "softness, gentleness, and ease," surrounded by her three darling girls, and a loving and attentive though rather coarse husband, and

"... health with competence, and peace
with love."

See her ere long—must we behold
it, or, having beheld, repeat it?—

"In that vile garret which I cannot paint,
The sight was loathsome, and the smell
was faint.

... reclined unmoved, her bosom bare
To her companion's unimpassioned stare.

.....
Sure it was all a grievous odious scene,
Where all was dismal, melancholy, mean,
Foul with compelled neglect, unwholesome
and unclean."

It is true, the repentance of one
or *both* is hinted at—

"I believe *her* mind
Is now enlightened—I am *sure* resigned :
..... *he* was past
All human aid, and shortly breathed his
last,
But his heart open'd, and he lived to see
Guilt in himself, and find a friend in me."

We should add, that we think these very traits of repentance, and, as it may happen, palliations or aggravations of guilt, are of so slight and equivocal a nature, as very much to perplex the true boundaries of vice and virtue. We do not understand in the sad self-inflicted end of the unfortunate Ruth, what moral exactly is meant to be conveyed in the following lines.

"She had—pray, Heav'n!—she had that
world in sight
Where frailty mercy finds, and wrong has
right ;
But sure, in this, her portion such has
been,
Well had it still remain'd a world unseen."

On the other hand, Lady Barbara's disobedience and want of fealty to her faithful ghost, and her rash vow, are visited with such horrible inflictions from her husband, as to extort the not very guarded exclamation,

"O! my God, what shame
What years of torment from that frailty
came!"

But we cannot leave the above-mentioned story of Ruth, without expressing our heartiest disapprobation of that other inveterate practice of Mr. Crabbe's, namely, the associating the name, profession, and *notions* of a something like religious faith, with the very worst features in heart and practice. The "reptile" described in that story,

"who beneath a show
Of peevish zeal, let carnal wishes grow ;

not help offering rather a strong opinion, that Mr. Crabbe fails in the point of instruction in his poems in two or three very important ways. First of all, we think he errs in making so many of his examples purely negative, and presenting to us the large mass of mankind and woman-kind, as only to be scorned for their vices, and scarcely ever to be pitied for their manifold and deserved misfortunes. Aristotle, it is true, makes it the office of tragedy to purify the mind by pity and terror: and if Mr. Crabbe's heroes and heroines rose to a certain pitch of gigantic action, or sunk to any thing like a state of honourable misfortune, we fully allow such an advantage might follow.—But these are not the favoured objects of Mr. Crabbe's portraiture, which rather are a set of low, mean, pitiful, and scoundrel passions, the sordid offspring of pure selfishness, and the proper and fit cause of a debasing and squalid wretchedness, such as we look for in the dungeon, or shudder at in the hospital. His very virtues are of a creeping order; but his vices positively wallow in a kind of moral stench: and both indicate a something in our poor mortal frame even lower than our avowed and too lamentable frailty; a lowness that nothing can raise; a total incapacity for any thing great, generous, and godlike. We approve, because the Scriptures approve, every description of fallen human nature that shall make it, in its own proper worth and merit, "abominable," and "none righteous; no, not one." But we do not wish to see its capacities trampled; its high and noble destinies trampled in the dust: nor do we willingly behold even man in his worst estate as "less than the archangel ruined; and the excess of glory obscured." We think ill both of the impression and the effect with which we rise from descriptions of human nature like many of Mr.

Crabbe's; an impression of the hatefulness of man, with the effect of scarcely wishing, because not hoping, to make him, by any efforts, better. How shockingly, indeed, must the fall of man not only have debased but annihilated his capacities, if this be really the case! how much changed from that primeval innocence and towering dignity of character!

"For contemplation He and valour
form'd—
For softness She and sweet attractive
grace."

How much below the hopes and feelings once entertained towards him even in his fallen state! "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that every one that believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

And this, again, leads us to say, that in the pages of Mr. Crabbe, Christianity itself—we say it with pain—seems to us degraded from its high and privileged authority; and the pure and undefiled religion of Jesus Christ, more than once unfeelingly confounded with the most horrid and polluted mixtures, is almost at all times exposed as a totally insufficient antidote either to the ills or the vices of mankind. By a most sad and disheartening process, Mr. Crabbe seems to make his characters, for the most part, good at first, such as their goodness is, and bad afterwards; and it seems to us as if his works might not be inaptly titled, *The Triumphs of Vice*. Virtue, resolution, honour, conscience, which with him seem to have existed previously in the mind, are all chased away before the breath of temptation, like chaff before the wind: and, instead of tracing the gradual and glorious transitions from bad to good, from the first corruptions of nature to the happy improvements of Divine grace, through the medium of the first and purest of religions, we have

to view in Mr. Crabbe's pages the puny efforts of a spurious or low-born innocence of nature, gradually or hastily subsiding into the depths of a miserable and overwhelming depravity.

"Still there was virtue, but a rolling
stone
On a hill's brow is not more quickly gone :
The slightest motion ;—ceasing from our
care,—
A moment's absence,—when we're not
aware,—
When down it rolls, and at the bottom
lies,
Sunk, lost, degraded, never more to rise !
Far off the glorious height from whence it
fell,
With all things base and infamous to
dwell.
Friendship with woman is a dangerous
thing—
Thence hopes avow'd and bold confessions
spring :
Frailties confess'd to other frailties lead,
And new confessions new desires suc-
ceed ;
And, when the friends have thus their
hearts disclosed,
They find how little is to guilt opposed."
Vol. II. pp. 30, 31.

Who would have thought this dire foreboding of a future fall, to belong to the amiable and delightful vicar's niece in Sir Owen Dale, all "softness, gentleness, and ease," surrounded by her three darling girls, and a loving and attentive though rather coarse husband, and

"... health with competence, and peace
with love."

See her ere long—must we behold
it, or, having beheld, repeat it?—

"In that vile garret which I cannot paint,
The sight was loathsome, and the smell
was faint.

... reclined unmoved, her bosom bare
To her companion's unimpassioned stare.

.....
Sure it was all a grievous odious scene,
Where all was dismal, melancholy, mean,
Foul with compelled neglect, unwholesome
and unclean."

It is true, the repentance of one
or both is hinted at—

"I believe *her* mind
Is now enlightened—I am *sure* resigned :
..... *he* was past
All human aid, and shortly breathed his
last,
But his heart open'd, and he lived to see
Guilt in himself, and find a friend in me."

We should add, that we think these very traits of repentance, and, as it may happen, palliations or aggravations of guilt, are of so slight and equivocal a nature, as very much to perplex the true boundaries of vice and virtue. We do not understand in the sad self-inflicted end of the unfortunate Ruth, what moral exactly is meant to be conveyed in the following lines.

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But we cannot leave the above-mentioned story of Ruth, without expressing our heartiest disapprobation of that other inveterate practice of Mr. Crabbe's, namely, the associating the name, profession, and notions of a something like religious faith, with the very worst features in heart and practice. The "reptile" described in that story,

"who beneath a show
Of peevish zeal, let carnal wishes grow ;

Proud and yet mean, forbidding and yet
full
Of eager appetites, devout and dull ;”

is but a match for other like characters drawn by the satirical pen of Mr. Crabbe, and which again meet us in “the “Maid’s Story” and “William Bailey ;” and to one and all we must say, though we are wholly unwilling to be thought the patrons of Dissent, Methodism or cant ; nay, though we have met ourselves accidentally with such horrid combinations as that which our poet describes ; yet that we protest most solemnly in the name of our common faith against any equivocal associations on serious subjects, where it, above all, behooves us to speak out plainly, and so as not to be misunderstood ; and that we from our heart condemn the too common practice of joining scriptural terms and ideas, such as zeal, devotion, experience, faith, &c. &c. with those detestable abuses to which the best things are most easily liable. Does Mr. Crabbe really mean to insinuate, that the more zeal, and warmth, and devotedness to the cause of Christ and his Gospel, persons may shew, the more they are to be suspected of nefarious designs and disgraceful lusts ? Or are the clergy of our venerable establishment so much his debtors as to stand exempted in his view from all those vices, open or nameless, with which he would exclusively charge dissenting teachers ? Or, finally, does he mean that all alike, whether preachers or professors, regular or irregular, of our holy religion, shall each in their way be suspected, be forcibly and of right accused of some mal-designs and mal-practices at bottom ; only with this difference, that to the regular shall be attributed the decent, and to the irregular the indecent, vices of humanity ? To us, we must say, it appears that the temptations and frailties of our common nature befall each of us alike as *men*, rather than as bearing this or that external cha-

racter. If money is the charm, *man* covets money ; if the appetite is tempted, *man* covets the gratification of appetite ; if excuses or masks are to be obtained for our vices, we take those which most readily offer themselves ; and the soundest moralist in the world, the sternest patron of good works, in theory, against the supposed licentiousness of faith, will tamper with his conscience in secret, and hoard his wealth, or indulge his *venial* errors and *unavoidable* frailties, and *natural* vices, on some perversion of his own principles, just as much as the Antinomian who cants about the flesh and the Spirit, and abuses the doctrine of mercy (that universal abuse) to his own undoing. The man who makes a talk about conversion, and regeneration, and faith, and grace, and the principles of the Bible, and the practices of secret or public devotion, is so far better off in one view, *primâ facie*, than others, that he at least *knows* his duty ; and, we imagine, has a strong, though secret monitor within the bosom, to check him, wherein soever he fails of that “holiness, without which no man can see the Lord.” We by no means, indeed, take for granted that he attends to that monitor, or is conscientiously and at heart a Christian. Some who know less, many who talk less, may feel more ; and even the commonly worldly man of honour and upright feeling might happen, of the two, to act more like a Christian. But we are more surprised and more shocked when we find it so ; and that because we know there is a vitality, an energy, a fire in the very terms and expressions of Scripture which operate against the practices of vice and immorality. To suppose, because a man has this guard against sin, that, therefore, he is never to be suspected of its commission, appears to us a most indefensible and highly dangerous position. It is preposterous to say that any sect or set of men, pro-

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fessing Bible principles, in whatever varieties, admit immorality and vice as a part of their creed. No man commits adultery, lies, or steals, but against his principles; and, if he is a professor of a pretended reformed creed, against very strong principles. And little as experience teaches us to credit a man's *profession* of belief, we still have great confidence in the power of *actual* belief: and if we find the appearance of believing strongly in the purities of the Gospel, we should *expect* to see, in a number of such persons, a far less measure of impurity and impiety, on the whole, than in the same number of men who openly profess but little, and secretly believe still less. Admit our expectation to be a fair one, and then what becomes of sweeping charges against profession as if all hypocrisy? Deny it, and then what becomes of those who profess to believe the Bible itself? The insolent and sneering infidel will then have the advantage even of the boastful defenders of the cause of Revelation. He indeed professes nothing; but, for the most part, his works will be a profitable comment on his negations.

But enough of this subject. All we wish in our Reverend Poet, is to keep the Bible out of question at least, if not to bring it in with all its train of healing and life-giving principles, as the cure of evil and the balm of woe. We are sorry indeed to find, that Robert the Poacher, during his nightly and nefarious trade, "read his Bible she was sure;" that

"He always pray'd ere he a trip began;"
that he was

"So kind to all men, so disposed to pray."

We entirely doubt the fact; and we quote in our support the approved saying of an old divine, that "either men will leave off sinning, or they will leave off praying." The clear

Christ. Observ. No. 214.

inference from the contrary would be, that prayer is of no avail, the Bible a mere bugbear to frighten children, and the grace of God wholly in vain.

We had intended to make some observations on the remarkable preponderance, in these volumes, of love stories; and the various feelings, bad and good (not always the latter,) detailed in connexion with the passion of love. We are not surprised that one who can paint this subject so well, should be ambitious of painting it often: nor can we wonder that one desirous, like Mr. Crabbe, of raising some of the strongest *home-emotions* in the hearts of his readers, should fix upon that passion which is well known to bear an undisputed sovereignty over the entire animal economy of nature. But this very last-named circumstance makes us doubt the propriety of assisting nature, where in point of fact she needs so little assistance. The business of *instruction* is to allay what is naturally predominant in the human soul, and to arouse its slumbering and oppressed faculties.—More particularly in that "blest prime when love is life's employ," we cannot but think it highly important to shew that there *are* employments better and higher; to convince us that it is not the first and only business of life to pair off in matrimonial or worse connexions; to prove that we may be happy, and even in honour, without the credit or the bliss of successful love; and that to form the mind and reform the heart, first to improve ourselves and then to help forward our fellow-men in the paths of peace and truth, are objects of ambition certainly as great as to dabble in scenes of, at least, an equivocal nature and questionable decency, and to win the heart of coy maiden, or valiant knight, with Cupid's bow or the soft sweetness of Lydian measures. These representations, we are persuaded, are much calculated to awaken ideas far beyond

the exact words of the narration, and to familiarize the tender and susceptible mind with vice in its most mischievous, because most insidious, forms: and the subsequent operation of those past, but *never forgotten*, feelings upon minds afterwards imbued with better principles, we often think leads far more to those inconsistencies in practice, those sad and humiliating conflicts between "the flesh and the Spirit," satirised by Mr. Crabbe himself, than all the lectures of Methodism, or the cant of Antinomianism. Whilst acknowledging the wisdom of a Creative Providence, in planting so strongly in the animal man that important tie between the sexes on which the preservation of the species depends, we can scarcely see any just claim upon its commendation from the poet, more than what belongs to our other appetites. And whilst marriage we know to be "an honourable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocency," "signifying to us," in its higher and purer joys, "the mystical union that is between Christ and his Church," we cannot but look forward to that time when, in its grosser sense, "we shall neither marry nor be given in marriage, but shall be as the angels of God in heaven."

We desire to be considered as throwing out these cursory observations, rather with a view to general use, than as aiming any pointed condemnation at the volumes immediately before us. At the same time, as Mr. Crabbe invites us, in the last paragraph of his preface, to a personal view of himself, as "a minister of religion in the decline of life"—and a more solemn and sacred character cannot exist in human shape—we are free to own, with much "indulgence to the propensities, studies, and habits of mankind," we still should have coveted from such a pen, even in its "moments of leisure and amusement," something more definitely instructive, though not less interesting, than the

present work; something that might at least have kept the bad things of the world a little more in the shade, and brought more forward into view the lightsome and the cheerful ways of everlasting peace and salvation. These—doubtless the cherished views of the declining minister of the Gospel of Peace—we should have wished him to introduce, with congenial warmth and genuine affection, to the notice and regard of his fellow-sinners. With so extended an opportunity, as the superior talents and reputation of Mr. Crabbe, perhaps for the last time, afford him, for casting his measure of "salt" upon the corruptions of "the earth," and kindling from his own flame the vital energies of a languishing and dark world, we should have rejoiced in having to contemplate an example of the wise and considerate use to be made of such an opportunity: and we should have received, with all the authority of age and experience, over and above that of superior discernment and intelligence, and crowned with the sanctity of a minister of religion, the noble testimony he might have borne to that wisdom, whose "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all whose paths are peace;" who is "a tree of life to them that lay hold of her," and more especially "a crown to gray hairs;" "and happy is every one who retaineth her."

The question which we had reserved for our final consideration, and which we must now, for obvious reasons, spare ourselves and our readers the trouble of discussing at any length—viz. whether the poet's first intention ought to be to please, and his attempt to instruct quite a contingency—does, we think, in the case now before us, admit but of one solution. Indeed, talents in general, of so interesting, so distinguished, so rare, and so highly privileged an order, as those of the true poet, by whomsoever possessed, do to us seem in their first exercise most imperatively to demand a leading tribute of glory to their Great Giver, as

well as of benefit to His creatures, whom it is always His first intention to instruct. Nor do we imagine the cause of poetry would at all suffer by such an intention. We might, indeed, bear a little less of certain obvious and questionable feelings of our nature, on which poets, intending first to please, are too apt to dwell with a fondness "akin to sickness." But instead of these, we should have the effusions of a vigorous and masculine understanding, leading us to all that is great and noble and generous in our common nature, and bearing us on lofty measures and daring thoughts, as on eagle-wings, towards heaven. We should learn from the M^{use} so regulated, perhaps less of the love of the sex, but more of the love of human kind, the love of virtue, the love of country, the love of God. In tracing the angel-flight of such a bard, we should feel not the less interest in his subject from our admiration of the man; something, on the other hand, of the greatness of the writer would insensibly communicate itself to the breast of the reader. Praise so obtained, would, we should think, be dear to any poet, if worthy of the name; and the laurels so obtained most honourable indeed. Such laurels, let us hope, we may yet have, in his declining years, to place with unreserved applause on the brows of our now respected Mr. Crabbe: such laurels we unreservedly concede as the just meed of the virtuous triumphs of Mr. Southey's maturer muse: and justly may England boast of more than a proportionate share of names, living and dead, from whom it were injustice to withhold the wreath. But if there be ONE, of either world, from whom that wreath shall be withheld; ONE from whom at least posterity shall snatch it with indignation, and who has himself, in the phrensy of an ignoble malevolence, torn it to atoms and trampled it in the dust; it is that man whose writings display the

resources of the finest genius in dark and unnatural connexion with the worst qualities of a perverted heart. Shall we say *their* first and *sole* intention is to please? If so, it is to please that they may corrupt; to smile, that they may slay. Their author speaks indeed of love, but he so speaks as to warn his stripling imitators of the dangerous illusions of the song. With a cold and satiate mind he seems to paint and revel in all the scenes of imagined debauchery; and in the "garnished nuisance" of a late work, scarce conceals, beneath the thinly scattered flowers on the surface, the semblance of a conscience, which, if authors are like their works, we should fear is dead to every just and legitimate feeling—"Lust hard by hate."—How long, indeed, an abused British public, and our fair countrywomen in particular, will suffer themselves to be held in the silken chains of a poetical enchantment; and how long admire a writer, who has to offer to their admiration a brighter gem, it is true, than any which sparkles in his coronet, the jewel of a rich and brilliant fancy; is more than we can tell. We have done our duty in seizing this opportunity, of which we are not ambitious of the repetition, to offer our friendly warning. For our own parts, we as little envy the reputation of an intimacy with such works, as we do the merit of their first production. If, according to the disgusting sarcasm of their author, the knowledge of their mischief will only further inflame, amongst those from whom we should hope better things, the curiosity to peruse them, we shall still have performed a duty: we must be satisfied with our good intentions, and with the thanks of those who *will* thank us. The wretched author might himself, perhaps, one day thank us, if, by any feeble representations of our own, or the stronger protests of other critics, his works should be *less sold* (the only calamity, we apprehend, such

authors *feel*;) and consequently his mind brought to a new position of self-recollection and inquiry. At present, feelings of the strongest pity for the man, mingle with our severer reflections on his detestable though fascinating poetry: and not only whilst enjoying our own fire-side comforts and domestic bliss, in all the plenitude and all the dulness of a contented mediocrity, but even whilst contemplating the penniless obscurity and anguished despair of Mr. Crabbe's imaginary "Patronized Boy" on his death-bed, if we are compelled to look abroad for a more pitiable object, we see it in one foolishly patronized to his own undoing by an ill-thinking multitude, who neither half relish nor half understand his poetry; we see it in the victim at once of passion and popularity, the self-exiled, the self-tormenting author of "Don Juan."

With such a fearful *negative* example before our eyes, in Mr. Crabbe's own compendious manner, "one moral let us draw,"—viz. the error of those who use the finest talents in poetry "to please, and not to instruct." And whilst we are very far from considering such a case as applicable, in any of its darker and more appropriate shades, to the writings of Mr. Crabbe, we are still prompt to offer a salutary warning to the writers as well as the readers of poetry; and to lay it down as always a questionable, and often a hazardous, principle in such works, to rest their credit rather on their pleasing than their instructive qualities. In Mr. Crabbe we cannot but see a genius of a very bright order, with a substance of good sense and sound feeling, to our minds a thousand times superior to the factitious and rhodomontading sentiment of the other writer, whose lyrical measures would even find some match from the pen of our present poet, if we are to judge from one or two exquisite specimens scattered up and down

his works, and one particularly at the conclusion of the Maid's story, beginning

"Let me not have this gloomy view
About my room, around my bed,
But morning roses, wet with dew,
To cool my burning brow instead."

We now take our leave of Mr. Crabbe; and should this slight notice of his late work ever chance to meet his eye, we should wish it to bear to his mind the assurance of our unfeigned respect for his very distinguished talents, our sincere thanks for the entertainment afforded us by his interesting work, and our unfeigned hope of meeting him again, on ground (we ask no more) at once worthy the power of his song, and capable of embalming all its worth in the records of an admiring posterity.

Moral Sketches of prevailing Opinions and Manners, foreign and domestic; with Reflections on Prayer.
By HANNAH MORE. London: Cadell and Davies. 1819. 12mo. pp. xix. and 518.

It is remarked by Dr. Johnson, that there are few things, not purely evil, of which we can say, without some emotion of uneasiness, *this is the last*; and he pleases himself with the idea that the last essay of his "Idler" will be read with care, even by those who had not attended to any other. We love not to part with an author, although anonymous, who has from time to time endeavoured simply to amuse a vacant hour, or to convey in a cheerful manner instruction which, for the most part, is neither very new nor very important. Great, therefore, is our concern at this moment, when admonished that we are now to bid farewell to a writer whose name has been familiar to most of us from the days of childhood, as closely combined with some of our most pleasing and most

sacred associations: whose poetry was among the delights of our morning of life, as her graver publications have continued to impart knowledge and improvement in our advancing years: who, leading us at first into the flowery fields of innocent recreation, has accompanied us in every future stage of our progress; and in many a dark and stormy season, fixing her own view steadily upon the Star of Bethlehem, and inviting us to follow the example of saints and sages, has, to the present hour, never ceased to travel and converse with us as our guide and counsellor and friend. With such a writer, so cordially endeared to us by all that can command respect or engage affection—by her abilities, and the uniform direction of them; by her influence, and the noble exercise of it; by the credit which she has given to good principles among the great, and the beneficial effects of her labours among the poor; by the true dignity with which in her own person she has invested the female character, teaching women what power they possess to improve society as well as to adorn it—with such a writer, commended to our regard by so many considerations, both present and prospective, it is impossible to part without casting many a lingering look behind us. We are very reluctant to bid farewell; and would fain indulge the hope that in taking her final leave of her readers, as Mrs. More informs us, in the preface to this volume, she now has done, the day of separation has not yet arrived. The indulgence and patience of the public, to adopt her own qualifying terms, are not yet either exhausted or wearied. The demand for a second edition of this work, before we reviewers had time to write a line about the first, will convince her, we trust, that the public are in no haste to part with a friend so long known, and so entirely beloved; and we are willing to persuade ourselves that the revered author of

so many excellent volumes will not withhold her admonitions, till constrained to rest from her labours by the approach of that night when no man can work.

The volume of which we are now to give some account, consists, as the title-page intimates, of three parts: the first entitled *Foreign Sketches*; the second, *Domestic Sketches*; and the third, *Considerations on Prayer*.

Under the first head, Mrs. More commences with the subject of foreign travel, remarking particularly upon the eagerness of our countrymen to desert their own island for the soil of France, and their readiness to enter into associations injurious to the character and religious habits of their native land. The spirit of the writer may be well illustrated by the verse which she has herself cited in the course of the discussion:

“I cannot bear a French metropolis.”

Her predilections, and she makes no secret of them, are entirely for the land of her fathers. A citizen of the world would with little ceremony, on the perusal of these pages, accuse her of prejudice and the want of liberality. We will not stop to inquire whether any plausible ground has been furnished for such an imputation; but we ourselves should not be disposed to find fault with just that degree of prejudice, in favour of our native land, which should induce all those to remain in it who could not assign a satisfactory motive for quitting it. And as to liberality, if it be extended with such wide and equitable diffusion, that the name of England shall convey to an English heart no reflections more delightful, and to an English ear no music more sweet and melodious, than that of another country, we care not how narrowly its influence is circumscribed among us. Cold indeed must be the feelings of that man who does not rejoice in the recollection

"That Chatham's language was his mother tongue,
And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own;"

who does not find in the bare mention of his country, and that country England, a glow of honest exultation, which neither the want of amenity in its climate, nor of polish in its people, nor of smoothness in its language, has any power to destroy. For ourselves, we have nothing to object to the English partialities of Mrs. More: they are partialities which, with certain limitations, we would cherish: they are founded upon reason and justice; and, without detracting an atom from true Christian charity, may become the source of much that is laudable and excellent in the character of our people. Looking at the subject with the eyes of a Christian patriot, she observes, in this rage of emigration, a spirit very different from that which our circumstances demand, and is alarmed at the probable effects of it. She laments the frivolity and ingratitude with which we seem, after such a war, to meet the blessings of peace: she laments the probable decline of religious principle and sound morals, from the seductive influence of the amusements and examples of a foreign and luxurious capital: and considers it as no slight addition to the evil, that, in this period of general distress at home, so much British money should be squandered in a strange land; and so many of our labouring poor, especially of the female sex, should be deprived of the means of an honest livelihood, by the illegal introduction of French articles of dress and decoration. It is very possible that a mind devotedly English, and jealous of any inroads upon the solid and sterling character of our countrymen, may be somewhat more alarmed at the mischiefs of foreign intercourse than the course of things would ordinarily warrant; yet the circumstances noticed by Mrs. More are of a nature to justify no small degree of apprehension.—

For what is the real state of the case? It is not that some of the more intelligent of our gentry or men of education have left their native shores to improve themselves by travel, or to bring back, for the benefit of their countrymen at home, the information to be derived by observing the progress of others in those arts which add to the happiness of private life or the welfare of society. Mrs. More would concur with Lord Bacon in admitting the utility of such travel, provided the person who engages in it is capable of the improvement which it offers, and adopts the rules necessary for turning it to account; letting it appear further, that "he does not change his country manners for those of foreign parts, but only pricking in some flowers of that he hath learned abroad into the customs of his own country."* The complaint is, that "hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children," a confused and heterogeneous crowd of persons of every sort and description, in a great measure perhaps without any settled principles at all, in many cases almost necessarily without that rational *amor patriæ* which arises from maturity of years and a knowledge of their country's institutions, and nearly in all cases with scarcely any other motive than the kind of vacant and undefined curiosity with which a boy just let loose from school runs off to a neighbouring fair, are passing over from Great Britain to France: and, moreover, that these persons, thus poorly qualified for travel, and thus bound avowedly, for the most part, on a voyage of amusement, do not merely visit the new land of promise, see whatever is to be seen, and then return to their homes with a Babylonish dialect which nobody can understand; but in too many cases fix upon that soil perhaps for years their future home. It requires no sturdy moralist to feel and to speak warmly upon subjects like these: *facit in-*

* Lord Bacon.

dignatio versum. Who, that has an English heart in his bosom, and either venerates the pure religion of his home, or loves "the noble simplicity, the ancient rectitude, the sound sense, and the native modesty," which have long been the characteristics of the British people, would not lament over this wide-spreading expatriation? Who would not deprecate the effects of these foreign associations, in their increasing influence over all the classes of society, when even the daughters of our farmers are to be "frenched and musicked," and then to be sent off, like their betters, to breathe the air and to flutter amidst the gayeties of France?

We would by no means be understood to say that France is without attractions of a higher order; and that a well-informed and well-principled Englishman may not visit that country with much advantage. If he seek for what is good, he will find talent and learning in that capital, as well as in his own; and Religion, which, notwithstanding the awful and desolating scenes through which she has been compelled to pass, has still lingered near the tombs of her ancient martyrs, is again beginning to resume her influence. But talent, and learning, and sound principle are not generally within the contemplation of our wandering countrymen: the great object is idleness and amusement; and from such travellers what is to be expected? It is impossible to imagine, even on the most favourable supposition, that these promiscuous and prolonged associations should not in a few years produce a great change in the feelings and manners of our people; and he must have impressions very different from ours, who can look at the prospect without painful anticipations.

In observations of this sort, as we have already intimated, there is no invasion of the province of Christian charity. Charity would teach us to

love our enemies, and, according to our ability, to do good unto all men; but we owe it also to ourselves to avoid evil communications. Mrs. More adverts, in one or two instances, to the calamities which have come upon us from the Revolution; and to some readers it may possibly appear that this is done rather in the spirit of hostility than benevolence: but neither is this the disposition of the writer, nor the aim and tendency of her work. Her object in these intimations is not to promote hostility, but to point out still more forcibly the frivolity of character and want of right feeling in our travellers, which can at once discard all these sufferings from their recollection, and carry them with gayety of heart to scenes which, above all others, the afflictions of their country would teach them to contemplate with saddened recollections. It is as if the survivors of a volcanic eruption should dance upon the mountain which had nearly overwhelmed their city, while their houses are still shaking, and the ground is heaving under their feet.

In order to ascertain the changes which French tuition is likely to produce on our people, Mrs. More proceeds to lay before us the opinion entertained by the French of English society, and to draw a picture of the vaunted society of Paris. The posthumous work of Madam de Staël furnishes the chief materials for the first description; and the records of the French themselves, principally during the reigns of Louis XIV. and XV., for the second; which, however, supply a very inadequate representation of the actual state of things in France. The conclusion is, that the taste and manners of the two countries are widely different. "If," indeed, as our author observes, "we were only sent into this world to be entertained;—if we had nothing to do but to talk; nothing to aim at but to shine; nothing to covet but admiration;"—we might

have much to learn on the nature of good society from our gay and brilliant neighbours. But this is not the object of human life, nor are we accustomed thus to consider it. We might, doubtless, have been amused, and, possibly, in some sense, instructed, by an occasional peep into the literary and gossiping parties of those wits who so long gave the law to the society of Paris: but a more attentive examination of them would convince us that these were whited sepulchres, and full of all uncleanness. This fair exterior was only a sort of veil, which served to conceal the real manners and characters of the actors: view them more narrowly, and you find in the best circles—those, at least, which were esteemed the best—a frivolity of pursuit, a profligacy of habit, and a contempt of religion, which in truth they were scarcely at any pains to conceal. To the silly love of admiration, and the vanity of flattering and being flattered, they were ready to sacrifice the innocence of youth, the consolations of age, and the hope of immortality. Against good taste, according to their estimate of taste, they were unwilling to offend; but of good principle they knew just nothing: they seem to have been almost unconscious of the distinctions between virtue and vice; and persons, who, in a better state of the public mind, would have been shunned like the pestilence, were not only visited with pleasure, but actually gave the tone to fashionable society. Where such was the system of social intercourse among the great, why should we be surprised at the general dissoluteness of manners which speedily followed, and the subversion of every institution which rested upon the basis of religion? Contempt for the altar of God almost necessarily involves, at one period or another, the overthrow of the throne. These remarks, however, have a more pointed reference to the age that is past, than to the present.

Mrs. More next turns to our own country; and, after paying a just tribute of gratitude to our late venerated queen, for her firmness in preserving the purity of the court,* dwells for a few pages upon the characters of some distinguished ladies, the ornaments of their sex and age, and worthy to be ranked among the highest examples of female worth. We admit that nothing could be more unfair than to adduce the du Deffands and de l'Espinasses, as specimens of what is to be found universally in French society, while Lady Mary Arminyn, and Rachel Lady Russel, are held forth as the representatives of our own. Neither is this the way in which Mrs. More introduces them: she does it to shew what was the prevailing taste in the French capital, on the one hand; and on the other, to prove that we have models at home of the first rank of female excellence—of excellence too which we have been accustomed to venerate, suited to the English taste and English character—excellence founded substantially upon the fear of God, and illustrated, under circumstances of peculiar trial, in the Christian discharge of all the social, relative, and religious duties.

With a view still directed to the same subject of foreign associations, Mrs. More employs the last chapter of this part of her work, in pointing out the best hope of England in these perilous times. This she maintains to consist in the early education of our people; of the rich as well as of the poor; in education which looks to the moral and religious improvement of the heart, as well as to the enlargement of the understanding; which instils into the mind the sacred lessons of the New Testament, and stores it with the great doctrines of the Gospel of Christ. To give greater pre-

* See a valuable pamphlet on this subject by "Lysias," lately published for Rivingtons.

cision and effect to her remarks upon this topic, Mrs. More supposes herself to be conversing with some individual father of a family in the higher ranks of life; and suggests, through several pages, a series of observations for the instruction of youth, which deserve to be seriously perused by every man of rank and fortune who regards the prosperity of his child. If the course here recommended be systematically and vigorously pursued, we may hope, by the Divine blessing, to raise an effectual barrier against the tide of evils which may otherwise roll in upon us; and by a right use of the other means of improvement which Providence has put into our power, may see our country not only recover what she has lost, but rise to heights still unattained.

"If the familiar and protracted intercourse with a neighboring nation; if, during this intercourse, the long witnessed contempt of religion, morbid insensibility to morals, desecrated Sabbaths, and abandonment to amusements the most frivolous, to pleasures knit in one eternal dance; if all this should happily have left unimpaired, or have only tintured, too slightly to make a lasting impression, the noble simplicity, the ancient rectitude, the sound sense, and the native modesty which have long been the characteristics of the British people; if the growth at home, and within our own doors, of an intolerant and superstitious church, be not too fondly fostered—be not promoted instead of tolerated; if the paramount fondness, in the more delicate sex, for unbounded dissipation, for profane and immoral writers, should decline; if the middle classes among us should return to their ancient sobriety and domestic habits, should cease to vie with the great in expensive dress, and the decorations of high life, and to give their daughters the same useless accomplishments, which are carried too far even in the highest station, and in theirs are preposterous; if the instruction we are at length giving to the poor be as conscientiously conducted as it is generally adopted, and the art of reading be made the vehicle of true religion; if a judicious correction of our criminal code, and a prudent rectification of the demands of pauperism, be successfully

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followed up; if the African slave-trade should be effectually abolished—not in promises, and on paper, but in very deed and act; if our prisons be made places of reformation, instead of increased corruption; if the young offenders be so instructed, that they come not out as bad as the old, and the old come not out worse than they went in; if our venerable universities should fulfil the promise they give of becoming as distinguished for moral discipline and strict religion, as they have ever been, and still are, unrivalled for learning and ability of every kind; if churches be as readily attended, as they will be cheerfully provided; if there be the same honourable attention paid to filling the pulpits, as to raising the buildings; if the Bible be as generally read by the giver, as it is liberally bestowed on the receiver; if the good old practice of family prayer should be revived, and public worship more carefully attended by those who give the law to fashion; if those who are 'the makers of manners' will adopt none but such as deserve to be imitated: if all these improvements should take place; and which of them, let me ask, is impossible? then, though we laugh to scorn the preposterous notion of human perfectibility, we shall yet have a right to expect that England, so far from being satisfied to excel other nations, will not only excel her present self, but be continually advancing in the scale of Christian perfection." pp. 20—23.

Acting with these views, we may become the honoured instruments of imparting benefits to our continental neighbours, instead of receiving injury from them; by diffusing through the medium of a well-regulated intercourse, better principles than have hitherto been acknowledged in France, and especially by leading them to set a right value upon the word of God, and upon the blessings and privileges of that Gospel which was intended for the benefit of all mankind.

The second division of this volume is entitled "*Domestick Sketches*," and relates to certain prevailing errors in opinion and in practical habits. The persons, for whose service this part of the work is more immediately designed, are supposed

to be already in a greater or less degree religious characters; and the intention is to establish them in a right faith and suitable conduct. Admonitions of this nature can never be inexpedient. Too many individuals may be found, in every age of the church, who lamentably disappoint the hopes which their early stages in religion had excited; and, perhaps, at no period of our history which was exempt from persecution, were instances of this kind more frequent or more afflicting than in the present day. The author of these *Sketches* has been an attentive observer of these "signs of the times:" and although some persons, through a feeling of mistaken tenderness to what is called the religious world, may wish, perhaps, that the delineations here presented to us, had been less minute and particular, we frankly declare that to this notion we cannot accede. In order to preserve pure and uncorrupted the great principles of the Gospel, and to retain those that profess religion in the way of holy obedience, it is not less necessary to guard against the *perversion* of the truth than the *contempt* of it; and there is no small danger in this age, when religious profession is creditable among us, and the love of novelty is at least equal to the love of truth, lest while we contend for the shadow we lose the substance of religion. Truth is simple; error is various: it meets us in a thousand forms; it flatters our vanity; it takes advantage of our passions; it is sometimes persuasive, and sometimes peremptory, and never presents itself in a more dangerous way than when, like the devil in the Wilderness, it speaks in the language of Holy Writ.

In entering upon this branch of discussion, our author employs her first chapter in urging the importance of soundness of judgment and consistency of conduct; the first necessary to keep "the talents in just subordination, and other princi-

ples in due equipoise," the last "the beautiful result of all the qualities and graces of a truly religious mind united and brought into action, each individually right, all relatively associated." The thing wanted to constitute such a Christian as shall "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things," next to real principle in the heart, is the operation of a "sound mind," a correct and well-balanced judgment in the intellect. From how many absurdities and delusions would the truth and habitual exercise of this judgment, through the blessing of God, preserve and deliver us!

From these topics Mrs. More proceeds to remark upon novel opinions in religion, confining her observations chiefly to those who claim the exclusive credit of *rationality*, "denying the Lord that bought them;" and to the class of persons who have lately made themselves notorious by the introduction of Antinomianism and Sabellianism, under the belief, that they had in fact discovered a new religion, which, alas for the blindness of reformers, confessors, and martyrs! had never been developed till now. Whether, if some intelligent person had been present to whisper into the ears of our new inventors of old heresies, that the merit of these discoveries belonged to others; that the doctrines which they now deliver as for the first time since the date of Christianity, had been promulgated long since, and long since exploded; it might have checked their confidence, and diminished their zeal, we are unable absolutely to decide. We suspect, however, that the supposed novelty of the system was, with many persons, not the least of its attractions. It was propounded with all the claims of original discovery; and a few "silly women" were "led captive" by it, just as they would have been attracted by the newest fashion. We have already, on various occasions, given

our sentiments on this subject : we shall do little more at present than subjoin a few detached paragraphs from the pages of Mrs. More.

"In another of the quarters alluded to, the more novel system, we hear much of opinions but little of practice ; much of doctrines, but little of holiness ; much of faith—a disproportioned and unproductive faith—but little of repentance. These grand ingredients, which, when severally coupled together, make up the sum and substance of Christianity—these joint essentials, which St. Paul preached invariably, and which, by never separating, he preached effectually—are now considered as separate interests, and severed from each other as having no necessary connexion." p. 141.

"We are assured that the changes in these ever varying theories are so frequent, that to confute them would be as difficult as unnecessary ; for that which by some of the party is insisted on in one week, gives way in the next to some wider deviation ; so that he who might wish to animadvert on some existing evil must be as rapid as its inventor, he must

'Catch ere it fall the Cynthia of the minute.'

"If in religious contemplation or discussion, we once give the reins to fancy ; if we cherish every seducing thought, merely because it is new ; if we set up for complete independence of opinion ; if we assume individual release from all the ties that hold Christian society together ; if we permit ourselves to plunge, into the unfathomable ocean of discovery, without compass or rudder, there is no saying where we may land ; it may be on the shore we now dread. Many of these leaders differ in opinion, but each seems to lay as exclusive a claim to truth as the pope himself ; but as the latter was equally infallible when there was one pope at Avignon and another at Rome, so the infallibility here seems to be lodged by each in himself—only with this variation, that these last begin by differing from each other, till in their more advanced progress they come to differ from themselves.

"Is not the recent Secession founded on a kind of spiritual democracy, an overturning system, an aversion to whatever is established, a contempt of authority, an impatience of subordination, a thirst for dictatorship ; with this difference that these religious dissidents loose the reins of their

self-government, instead of those of their country." pp. 143—145.

"Extravagance in religion is a kind of spiritual empiricism, which is sure for a time to lay hold on the vulgar. The ignorant patient, in both cases, who frequently pays little attention to the established physician, is sure to be attracted by any new nostrum from the laboratory of the irregular prescriber : he is resorted to with more confidence in proportion to the reputed violence of his catholicon ; and he who despised the sober practitioner swallows without scruple the most pernicious drug of the advertising professor." pp. 146, 147.

One of the most awful symptoms in this Proteus-like party, is the spirit and manner in which their researches appear to be conducted. A fair and candid inquirer after religious truth will approach the sacred volume with a deep sense of his own ignorance and insufficiency, with humility, docility, reverence, and godly fear.

"But if men come to the perusal of the Bible with certain prepossessions of their own, instead of a simple and sincere desire after Divine truth ; if, instead of getting their obliquities rectified by trying them by this straight line, they venture to bend the straight line till it fits their own crooked opinions ; if they are determined to make between them a conformity which they do not find, they are not far from concluding that they have found it. By such means, a very little knowledge, and a great deal of presumption, has been the ground-work of many a novel and pernicious system." pp. 152, 153.

Under such circumstances, the discovery of holy truth may be safely pronounced to be unattainable : and we believe that we are not uncharitable in expressing our apprehension, that the last cited paragraph is but too correct a description of our new discoverers. We have ever considered the *spirit* of the party as remarkable for flippancy and caprice ; and, looking at the spirit *alone*, we are greatly deceived, if it do not plunge its possessors into the gulf of Socinianism, or leave them finally without chart or compass, confounded, bewildered, and lost.

The secession of these persons from the Established Church was, under their circumstances, a case of necessity: it was impossible that with the sentiments avowed by them, they could still continue to minister in her sanctuary, or even to worship in her courts. But the evils resulting from this secession are of no ordinary magnitude, and they are well and forcibly stated in the volume before us. We hope that the chapter on this subject will be duly considered by all whom it concerns. It may serve to check that unhallowed boldness of inquiry, and undaunted promptness of decision, which are now so lamentably prevalent: and, by inducing habits of serious reflection, and persuading men to learn before they presume to teach, may tend in some measure to bring back the reign of common sense, and to preserve the general cause of religion from misrepresentation and disgrace. For the effect of this spiritual vanity, which leads our novice instructors to become teachers, "when they have need to be taught themselves, which be the first principles of the oracles of God," is neither confined to themselves, nor to their hearers, nor to the circle with which they are immediately connected: its operation is mischievous, not merely upon those who come within the sphere of its influence, but upon multitudes who are distant spectators. A prejudice against the Truth itself is thus implanted in the minds of many, who, if they were not alarmed by these overflowings of folly and extravagance, would be glad to embrace it; whilst the adversaries of serious piety take occasion to throw discredit upon the orthodoxy of every man who is really in earnest for the salvation of the soul. It would be almost incredible, if every day's experience did not convince us of the fact, that in an island so small as Great Britain, misconception and misrepresentation with respect to the characters and opinions of the more religious members of the Church of England—for it will hardly be said, either of the clergy or the laity, that all are *equally* religious—should be carried to such a remarkable extent. Suppose a foreigner to come into this country, and either to attend some of our churches, especially on occasions of peculiar solemnity, or to read the controversial publications which are daily issuing from the press, what would be his opinion concerning the present state of the Church of England? He would learn that the church is divided into two parties; the one orthodox, learned, moderate, with the bench of bishops and dignitaries at the head of it, anxious to preserve the truth from corruption, and zealous in contending for that pure form of apostolical faith which is embodied in the formularies of the national church;—the other consisting of a strong party, neither orthodox, nor learned, nor moderate, of principles so intolerant, that they arrogate to themselves the exclusive title of Evangelical Preachers, of consciences so accommodating, that they continually impugn the Articles which at their ordination they subscribed; teaching that men are to be saved by a mere dead faith unproductive of works, that repentance is unnecessary, Divine grace irresistible and indefectible, election unconditional, conversion instantaneous, sanctification imputed, &c. &c.; that these men, with malignant hostility, are labouring to subvert the establishment which supports them; that some of them have already seceded, and that the rest are mightily inclined to follow this example. He would find these assertions made at the time and in the country, where these persons are reported to live; and he would soon be convinced that, whether true or false, such statements were very generally credited by men of rank and respectability in the church. We

will not waste the time of our readers by proving the injustice of these allegations: this has frequently been done: the system of misrepresentation, however, is still pursued, and will continue to be pursued so long as enthusiasm and folly are to be found among the professors of religion, or human passions and human interests are cherished with more ardour than the love of truth.

"This lumping system," observes Mrs. More, "is not a little hard on the steady and orderly divine. It weakens the hands of the faithful pastor, when his auditors, who have just been hearing him speak the words of truth and soberness, find him, perhaps, in the next controversial pamphlet they take up, coupled with the half insane, and the wholly absurd. It is hard that the zealous Christian, who is at the same time a pattern of propriety and correct demeanour, should be dragged in to make common cause with those at whose principles he shudders. Yet these men of opposite characters, principles, and pursuits, are forced into contact, are together plunged into the crucible of undistinguishing prejudice, and melted down together; all distinctions so lost in the fusion—the sober Christian so mixed with the fanatic, the temperate with the fiery, the regular with the eccentric—that they come out of the furnace blended into one common mass, and are reproduced as if formed of one common material." pp. 184, 185.

If the mischievous effects of this system were felt only by the individuals calumniated, we should consider it as a matter of little account; but the misfortune is, that the way of truth itself is evil spoken of, and that numbers of our fellow-creatures pass out of time into eternity under the belief that religion is a formal rather than a spiritual thing, and live and die in ignorance of its nature, and destitute of its real consolations.

Among the circumstances by which the present times are distinguished, may be noticed particularly the exertions of pious ladies. Mrs. More, ever sensibly alive to the credit and

character of her own sex, is anxious not only to give their labours a right direction, but to guard them against any evils with which they might possibly be associated. This she has done with her accustomed delicacy and judgment, vindicating the principle, but examining also the motives of action, and contending for that sobriety, moderation, and regard to private and relative duties, which are on no account to be sacrificed. It was impossible to touch upon this topic, without being reminded of the example which has been set to the ladies of England, in the reformation of Newgate, by "the Female Howard," and, to adopt the words of the author, "justice as well as gratitude would be wounded, were no tribute to be paid to the most heroic of women." Concerning the labours of this lady, there is but one opinion: they are above all praise; and independent of their immediate effects, independent of the effects which will be produced in other prisons by the influence of her noble example, they will render great service to society by justifying and accrediting the exertions of pious ladies in the various departments of charity. It will soon be considered not the reproach, but

"the glory of our age, that among the most useful and zealous servants of our Divine Master, are to be found, of 'devout and honourable women not a few.' Ladies, whose own education not having been limited to the harp and the sketch-book, though not unskilled in either, are competent to teach others what themselves have been taught; who disdain not to be employed in the humblest offices of Christian charity, to be found in the poorest cottage, at the bed-side of the sick and dying; whose daughters, if not the best *waltzers*, are the best *catechisers*; whose houses are houses of prayer, whose closets are the scene of devout meditation; who, not contented with the stinted modish measure of a single attendance on public worship, so contrive to render the hours of repast subservient to those of duty, as to make a second visit to the temple of their God; and who

endeavour to retain the odour of sanctity, shed on the sacred day, through the duties of the week." pp. 200, 201.

It will answer yet another purpose, by shewing how the most enlarged and difficult labours of charity are compatible with a close attention to ordinary duties.

"If ever a charity of so extensive and public a nature could have been pleaded as some excuse for the remission of domestic duties, this might have been considered as the one exempt case; but it was not so. If she stole some hours from her family to visit the prison, she stole some hours from sleep to attend to her family." p. 213.

The next class of Christians which falls under the observation of our author consists of those who with high professions are negligent in practice. The reader will probably recognise, in the description given of them, several of his acquaintance; and if he happen to discover himself, we would hope that it may be the means of enlarging his charity, and inducing him to seek for better views of religion than he has hitherto attained. Mrs. More distinguishes these persons by the title of Phraseologists; and, among other traits by which they may be known, mentions the following.

"Professing to believe the whole of the Gospel, they seem to regard only one half of it. They stand quite in opposition to the useful and laborious class whom we last considered. None will accuse these of that virtuous excess, of that unwearyed endeavour to promote the good of others, on which we there animadverted. These are assiduous hearers, but indifferent doers; very valiant talkers for the truth, but remiss workers. They are more addicted to hear sermons, than to profit by them.

"Their religion consists more in a sort of spiritual gossiping, than holiness of life. They diligently look out after the faults of others, but are rather lenient to their own. They accuse of being legal those who act more in the service of Christianity, and dispute less about certain opinions. They

overlook essentials, and debate rather fiercely on, at best, doubtful points of doctrine; and form their judgment of the piety of others, rather from their warmth in controversy, than from their walking humbly with God.

"They always exhibit in their conversation the idiom of a party, and are apt to suspect the sincerity of those whose higher breeding, and more correct habits, discover a better taste. Delicacy with them is want of zeal; prudent reserve, want of earnestness; sentiments of piety, conveyed in other terms than are found in their vocabulary, are suspected of error. They make no allowance for the difference of education, habits, and society: all must have one standard of language, and that standard is their own.

"Even if, on some points, you hold nearly the same sentiments, it will not save your credit; if you do not express them in the same language, you are in danger of having your principles suspected. By your proficiency or declension in this dialect, and not by the greater or less devotedness of your heart, the increasing or diminishing consistency in your practice, they take the gauge of your religion, and determine the rise and fall of your spiritual thermometer. The language of these technical Christians indisposes persons of refinement, who have not had the advantage of seeing religion under a more engaging form, to serious piety, by leading them to make a most unjust association between religion and bad taste.

"When they encounter a new acquaintance of their own school, these reciprocal signs of religious intelligence produce an instantaneous sisterhood; and they will run the chance of what the character of the stranger may prove to be, if she speaks in the vernacular tongue. With them, words are not only the signs of things, but things themselves." pp. 216—219.

"By the apparent depth of their views, and this cant in the expression, the stranger is led to think there is something unintelligible in religion—some mysterious charm, which is too high for her apprehension. They will not hold out to her the consoling hope of progressive piety; for, with them, growth in grace is no grace at all,—the starting-post and the goal are one and the same point. One of these consequences probably follows: she either falls into their peculiar views, or she is driven to seek wiser counsellors, or is led, by the hope-

lessness of attaining to their supposed elevation, to give up the pursuit of religion altogether.

"These technical religionists are so far from encouraging favourable tendencies, and 'the day of small things,' that they have no patience with persons professing hope, and despise every advance short of assurance.

"To judge of them by their conversation, they seem to have as firm a certainty of their own security, as of the danger of all the rest of the world; that is, of all those who do not see with their eyes, hear with their ears, and discuss in their language. You would suppose salvation a very easy attainment, to see them got so much above hopes or fears." pp. 221, 222.

"To these persons, the exclusive credit of their individual preacher is at least as valuable a consideration, as the glory of that God whom it may be his constant aim to glorify; and they do not think they exalt him sufficiently, if it be not done at the expense of others among his brethren, to whom he perhaps looks up with reverence." pp. 223, 224.

"These religionists delight to speak of themselves as a persecuted people; so that a stranger not accustomed to their dialect, and having been in the habit of hearing the term applied to imprisonment, anathema, and proscription, is rejoiced when he afterwards finds it means no more than a little censure, and not a little ridicule; the latter perhaps more frequently drawn on them by their quaint phrases, injudicious language, and oddity of manner, than meant to express any contempt of religion itself." pp. 228, 229.

"In short, the religion of the phraseologists is easy, their acquisitions cheap, their sacrifices few, their stock small, but always ready for production. This stock is rather drawn from the memory than the mind; it consists in terms rather than in ideas, in opinions rather than in principles; and is brought out on all occasions, without regard to time, place, person, or circumstance." p. 230.

The delineation of their characters serves in some measure to point at the advice which a person of sound mind would be disposed to suggest to them; and we shall only add, that the corrections proposed by Mrs. More are as wise and salutary as her delineations are just.

The remaining subjects, under the head of Domestic Sketches, are entitled *Auricular Confession*, *Unprofitable Reading*, and *the Borderers*. The first introduces us to a description of persons with whom we were previously but little acquainted; certain young ladies of good talents and considerable cultivation, who, "under the humble guise of soliciting instruction and attaining comfort, propose to their spiritual guides doubts which they do not entertain, disclose difficulties which do not really distress them, ask advice which they probably do not intend to follow, and avow sensibilities with which they are not at all troubled." We cannot doubt, that such characters exist; and if they must be noticed at all, they could not meet with admonition from a kinder instructress: we will not deny also, that this sort of religious coquetry is highly objectionable, not merely as offensive to good taste, and as opposed to Christian simplicity and honesty of purpose, but as it may eventually lead to ill sorted connexions. We would request only, that Mrs. More may be not so far misunderstood as if this auricular confession were very generally prevalent. We suspect that it has never made much progress, and that it will from this time be heard of no more.

After several judicious remarks upon unprofitable reading—an evil of very serious magnitude, whether we regard the time which it consumes or its too frequent effects upon the imagination and the conduct—Mrs. More passes on to "*the borderers*;" a civil, obliging, and accommodating people, who occupy a sort of neutral ground between religion and the world; a race so perfectly well-bred as to be desirous of keeping on good terms with their neighbours on both sides of the boundary. Their characters are drawn in a somewhat playful manner; but as their condition is perilous, as they stand aloof from the constraining power and

practical consequences of religion, they are addressed, toward the close of the chapter, in terms of affectionate remonstrance and with impressive solemnity. We shall present our readers with a brief outline of their character. Situated in a territory between the different regions occupied by the world and religion,

"they are invited to intimacy by the gratifications held out by the one, and the reputation conferred by the other; present indulgence tempts on the left, future hope on the right. The present good, however, is generally too powerful a competitor for the future. They not only struggle to maintain their own interest in both countries, but are kindly desirous of accommodating all differences between the belligerent powers.— Their situation, as borderers, gives them great local advantages on both sides. Though they keep on the same good terms with both, they have the useful and engaging talent, of seeming to belong exclusively to that party in which they happen to find themselves.

"Their chief difficulty arises when they happen to meet the inhabitants of both territories together; yet so ingenious are they in the art of trimming, that they contrive not to lose much ground with either.

"When alone with one party, they take care never to speak warmly of the absent. With the worldly they smile, and perhaps good naturedly shake their head at some little scruples, and some excess of strictness in the absent party, though they do not go the length of actual censure.

"When with the religious colony, they tenderly lament the necessity imposed on them of being obliged to associate so much with neighbours from whom, they confess, there is not much to be learned, while they own there is something to be feared; but, as they are quite sure their inclination is not of the party, they trust there is no great danger. They regret, that as they must live on terms with the world, they cannot, without a singularity to which ridicule would attach, avoid adopting some of their manners and customs. Thus they think it prudent to indulge in the same habits of luxury and expense; to conform to many of the same practices, doubtful at the best;

and to attend on some places of diversion, for which, indeed, they profess to feel no great relish, and which, for the sake of propriety, are rather submitted to than enjoyed! 'One would not be particular, one does no good by singularity.'

"By an invariable discretion, they thus gain the confidence and regard of both parties. The old settlers on the fashionable side are afraid of losing them, by opposition to their occasionally joining their enemies; while the religious colonies are desirous of retaining them, and rendering them service by courtesy and kindness, still charitably hoping their intentions are right, and their compliances reluctant.— Thus their borders are every day extending, and their population increasing. As they can speak, as occasion requires, the language of both countries, they have the advantage of appearing to be always at home with each, who never suspects that the same facility in the dialect of the other, equally secures their popularity there." pp. 251—254.

"Thus, though hovering on the borders of both countries, they do not penetrate into the depths of either. The latitude they happen to be cast in varies according to circumstances. An awakening sermon will drive them, for a time, beyond the usual geographical degree; an amusing novel, or a new canto of *Childe Harold*, will seduce them to retreat. Their intentions however, they flatter themselves, are generally on the right side, while their movements are too frequently on the other.

"But though their language can accommodate itself to both parties, their personal appearance is entirely under the direction of one of them. In their external decorations, they are not behind the foremost of their fashionable friends; and truth obliges us reluctantly to confess, that their dress is as little confined within the bounds of strict delicacy, as that of women the rest of whose conduct is more exceptionable. The consequence is not unnatural; for to those who must do like other people, it is also necessary to look like other people. It does, however, seem a little incongruous to hear the language of one of the countries spoken, even with a strong accent, by ladies in the full costume of the other." pp. 254—256.

The existence of these borderers

is the natural consequence of the increase of true religion in the higher classes of society; and in proportion to that increase will be the accession to their numbers. Every real Christian of rank and influence is emphatically as a city set upon a hill: he comes necessarily within the observation of many around him; and if he be exemplary for the spirit of Christianity, some individuals, especially of that sex which is most remarkable for religious and devotional feeling, will be attracted by his demeanour, and take pleasure in his society. Of these it is too much to expect that all shall become acquainted with the vital power of religion: some will stop short of it, although with a tolerably distinct knowledge and clear approbation of the doctrines of the Gospel, and they will settle among the Borderers.—With them will be associated many of the children of pious families, and not a few of those who have been favoured with the privileges of a religious education. Their numbers will, almost in despite of the suggestions of conscience, inspire them with the idea of security; and they will be ready to persuade themselves, that the main difference between them and their more rigid neighbours consists in their having discarded the peculiarities which render the Gospel unnecessarily offensive. But is this the religion of the Bible? Is it thus that the world is to be crucified to us and we to the world?—thus that we are to present ourselves “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God,” and to be “transformed by the renewing of the mind?” The amiable qualities of many of these persons may, perhaps, render both themselves and others insensible to their real condition: but in religion there is no middle way. “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him: if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” We are all walking either in the narrow

Christ. Observ. No. 214.

path which leadeth unto life, or the broad way of destruction: there is no intermediate state between the children of the world and the children of God.

“They who run in a race,” as our author observes on this topic, “though they may come closer to the goal, yet if they come short of it, fail of the prize as completely as those competitors whose distance is greater; and if we come short of heaven, whether we lose it by more or fewer steps, the failure is equally decisive, the loss equally irreparable.” p. 264.

We now come to the third subject of this interesting volume: namely, *Reflections on Prayer*. Under this general title are comprised many subordinate points of discussion; the principal aim of the author being to impress her readers with a right sense of the excellency of prayer, and to prevail upon them to live in the practice and spirit of it. In pursuing these inquiries, she shews the tendency of some of the great doctrines of Scripture to promote the habit of prayer; the effect of certain false doctrines as injurious to it; the condition of its attendant blessings; the errors, which may hinder its being answered; the excuses, which men are apt to frame for the omission of this duty; the perpetual and universal obligation of it; its beneficial effects upon ourselves and others: these, and many similar topics are treated in a very impressive manner, and are enriched with a variety of collateral observations suited to throw light upon the subjects with which they are connected. One great excellence in this part of the work is the perfect freedom from that didactic constraint which too frequently attends professed essays upon the doctrines and duties of religion. Mrs. More has consulted the benefit of her readers, by suggesting her observations in the most easy and natural way. We seem, indeed, rather to be enjoying her conversation, than to be reading her works; and

she speaks to us with the ease and energy of a person who loves the subject of discourse, and who is at home in it; who can describe the value of prayer, and tell of its consolations, not from the report of others, but her own experience.—Every thing seems to come from a full heart; and when to this circumstance we add, what is every where visible, and every where subservient to the main object, that acquaintance with the human mind which our author possesses in so eminent a degree, we think that few persons can read these pages without finding something suitable to their own case, and deriving advantage from the perusal. We cannot suppress the further remark, How different would be the character of the Christian world, if those that professedly belong to it were such as this volume invites them to become! How different, in general, would Christianity herself appear, if her countenance were always seen as irradiated by that heavenly expression, which it is the tendency of prayer to kindle—the expression of meekness, and gentleness, and resignation, and love!

The extracts which follow are taken without any particular selection: they will justify the account we have given, and preclude the necessity of any additional observations of our own.

The patient Christian.

"Under the pressure of any affliction, *thy will be done*, as it is the patient Christian's unceasing prayer, so is it the ground of his unvarying practice. In this brief petition he finds his whole duty comprised and expressed. It is the unprompted request of his lips, it is the motto inscribed on his heart, it is the principle which regulates his life, it is the voice which says to the stormy passions, 'Peace! be still!' Let others expostulate, he submits. Nay, even submission does not adequately express his feelings. We frequently submit, not so much from duty as from necessity; we submit, because we cannot help ourselves. Resignation sometimes may be mere acquiescence in the sovereignty,

rather than conviction of the wisdom and goodness of God; while the patient Christian not only yields to the dispensation, but adores the Dispenser. He not only submits to the blow, but vindicates the Hand which inflicts it: 'The Lord is righteous in all his ways.' He refers to the chastisement as a proof of the affection of the Chastiser: 'I know that in very faithfulness thou hast caused me to be afflicted.' He recurs to the thoughtlessness of his former prosperity. 'Before I was afflicted I went astray,' and alludes to the trial less as a punishment than a paternal correction. If he prays for a removal of the present suffering, he prays also that it may not be removed from him, till it has been sanctified to him. He will not even part from the trial till he has laid hold on the benefit." pp. 337, 338.

Benefit of habitual prayer.

"Habitual prayer may prove a most effectual check to any doubtful or wrong action, to which circumstances may invite us during the day on which we are entering. The very petition to our Heavenly Father, 'Deliver us from evil,' forcibly felt and sincerely expressed, may preserve us from being seduced into it. And is not the praying Christian less likely to 'fall into temptation,' than they who neglect to pray that they may not be led into it?

"The right dispositions of the heart, and the fervour of devotion reciprocally excite each other. A holy temper sends us to prayer, and prayer promotes that temper. Every act of thanksgiving tends to make us more grateful, and augmented gratitude excites more devout thanksgiving.

"The act of confession renders the heart more contrite, and deeper contrition induces a more humbling avowal of sin. Each, and all, send us more cordially to the Redeemer: the more fervent the prayer the more entire is the prostration of the whole man at the foot of the Cross." pp. 359, 360.

On the subject of *progressive sanctification*, we have the following just and important observations.

"If ever progressive sanctification was exhibited in the life, as well as writings, of any one man more than another, it was in this heroic champion of Divine Truth. If ever one man more than another had a right to depend on his own safe state, it was the divinely illuminated St. Paul.

"Yet did *he* spend his after-life in self-satisfaction and indolent security? Did *he* ever cease to watch, or pray, or labour? Did *he* ever cease to press the duty of prayer on his most established converts? Did *he*, in the confidence of supremely eminent gifts, ever cease himself to pray? Were *his* exertions ever abridged; *his* self-denial ever diminished? Did *he* rest satisfied with present, though supernatural attainments? Did *he* remember the things which were behind? Did *he* live upon the good he had already done, or the grace he had already received? Did *he* count himself to have attained? Did *he* stop in the race set before him? Did not *he* press forward? Did not his endeavours grow with his attainments? Did not his humility and sense of dependence outstrip both? If *he* feared being a castaway, after the unutterable things he had seen and heard, and after the wonders he had achieved, shall the best man on earth be contented to remain as he is? If it were attempted, the most sanguine man on earth would find it to be impossible; nothing either in nature or in grace 'continueth in one stay.' He who does not advance, is already gone back. This glorious, because humble Apostle, went on in progressive sanctification, he continued to grow and to pray, till he at length attained to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

"But what enabled this unparalleled man to maintain, to the end, this painful conflict? It was the same support which is still offered to the meanest Christian. It was humble, fervent, persevering prayer. It was the spirit of supplication, infused and sustained by 'the renewing of the Holy Ghost,' and presented through the Divine Mediator.

"And what the Apostle did in his own person, we repeat, he unweariedly pressed upon all his converts. He exhorted them to pray for themselves, and for each other, in the same spirit in which 'he bowed his own knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they might be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;—that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith;—that they might be rooted and grounded in love;—that they might know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge;—that they might be filled with all the fulness of God.' " pp. 371—374.

We pause for a moment to observe, that the title of this chapter appears to convey a wrong idea of

its contents, and of Mrs. More's views:—

"The Doctrine of imputed Sanctification, newly adopted—The old one of progressive Sanctification, newly rejected—Both Doctrines injurious to Prayer." p. 361.

The words seem to imply that the doctrine of *progressive* as well as *imputed* sanctification is injurious to prayer; whereas the charge is meant to apply to the doctrine of *imputed* sanctification, and to *that doctrine* which *denies progressive* sanctification. We make the remark merely for the sake of correctness in a future edition.

In speaking of the connexion between certain prescribed duties and promised blessings, Mrs. More offers some just and pertinent remarks upon the use of certain terms, which it has lately been too much the fashion with religious persons to discard.

We particularly recommend these remarks to the consideration of the clergy.

"The obnoxious terms to which we here allude are rewards and conditions. We have, in general, avoided the use of them, not for any harm discoverable in them when used and understood in the scriptural sense, but for fear of creating an idea contrary to what was intended to be conveyed. In the legal sense they are very exceptionable; for in the one case we deserve nothing from God, and in the other we can do nothing of ourselves.

"We do not presume to make conditions with God, but He condescends to propose them to us. In this latter case, it is free grace imposes the reasonable condition: his free grace bestows the unmerited reward. Are not all the promises of the Gospel conditional? The beatitudes include both the condition and the reward. Our blessed Saviour, his Sermon, multiplies, and individualizes his promises. He gives us a string of articles of blessedness and recompense; the specific recompense to the specific duty;—amongst others, mercy to the merciful; the kingdom of heaven to those who are persecuted for

righteousness' sake ; the vision of God to the pure in heart.

"The Holy Spirit consecrates the doctrine of rewards by teaching the Apostle to connect it even with the very being of Omnipotence. 'God is,' and it immediately follows, that 'he is a rewarder of them that seek him.' Surely this is a condition, as much as the threat that he will punish those 'who know not God.' Every where, and particularly in the Psalms, prayer is made the condition of obtaining. In asking, seeking, and knocking, the condition and the reward most appropriately meet.

"To those who come to the Redeemer, he has declared that 'they shall in no wise be cast out.' Their coming is the condition of their being accepted. 'Rest,' again, is the consoling promise which he makes to 'the heavy laden,' who come to him. 'He that honoureth me, I will honour,' is both a condition and a reward. What is the promise of pardon to repentance, but a condition? The negative denunciation is a condition. 'Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.' 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord; without faith it is impossible to please God.' Do not these imply the blessings attending the contrary temper? State the question thus: Shall we be heard, if we do not pray? Shall we be pardoned, if we do not repent?

"'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.' It is the love of God then, which is the condition of obtaining those things which the heart of man cannot conceive.

"All the promises made to faith are conditions, as are those made to holiness. The good and faithful servants who well employed their ten and five talents, were rewarded by having their talents doubled; the punishment of their unprofitable companion was a conditional punishment. He had made no use of what was committed to him." pp. 395—398.

The chapter on the Lord's Prayer (p. 471) will be highly gratifying to the friends of our Bible and Missionary Associations. It not only vindicates the cause which they have adopted, but shews, as a necessary deduction from the prayer, the absolute duty of promoting schemes to advance the glory of God. To continue in the habit of repeating

this prayer, without any Christian attempt to hasten the consummation which we profess so earnestly to desire, when the will of God shall be done on earth, as it is done in heaven, is an evidence of inconsistency for which it is difficult to find a name. "If we contribute not to the accomplishment of the object for which we pray, what is this," as our author justly demands, "but mocking Omniscience, not by unmeaning but unmeant petitions?" We have no right to expect miracles: in this day they are unnecessary. "If the Gospel," says Bishop Butler, as cited by Mrs. More, "had its proper influence on the Christian world in general, as this country is the centre of trade and the seat of learning, a very few years, in all probability, would settle Christianity in every country in the world, *without miraculous assistance*."

We close our extracts with the concluding paragraphs of the volume.

"The Scripture views of heaven are given rather to quicken faith than to gratify curiosity. There the appropriate promises to spiritual beings are purely spiritual. It is enough for believers to know that they shall be for ever with the Lord; and though 'it doth not yet appear what we shall be, yet we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him.' In the vision of the Supreme Good, there must be supreme felicity. Our capacities of knowledge and happiness shall be commensurate with our duration. On earth, part of our enjoyment—a most fallacious part—consists in framing new objects for our wishes; in heaven there shall remain in us no such disquieting desires, for all which can be found we shall find in God. We shall not know our Redeemer by the hearing of the ear, but we shall see him as he is: our knowledge, therefore, will be clear, because it will be intuitive.

"It is a glorious part of the promised bliss, that the book of prophecy shall be realized; the book of providence displayed, every mysterious dispensation unfolded, not by conjecture, but by vision. In the grand general view of Revelation, minute description would be below our ideas; circumstantial details would be dis-

paraging; they would debase what they pretended to exalt. We cannot conceive the blessings prepared for us, until he who has prepared reveal them.

"If, indeed, the blessedness of the eternal world could be described, new faculties must be given us to comprehend it. If it could be conceived, its glories would be lowered, and our admiring wonder diminished. The wealth that can be counted has bounds; the blessings that can be calculated have limits. We now rejoice in the expectation of happiness inconceivable. To have conveyed it to our full apprehensions, our conceptions of it must then be taken from something with which we are already acquainted, and we should be sure to depreciate the value of things unseen, by a comparison with even the best of the things which are seen. In short, if the state of heaven were attempted to be let down to human intelligence, it would be far inferior to the glorious but indistinct glimpses which we now catch from the oracles of God, of joy unspeakable, and full of glory. What Christian does not exult in that grand outline of unknown, unimagined, yet consummate bliss—'in Thy presence is the fulness of joy, and at Thy right-hand is pleasure for evermore.'" pp. 515—518.

Every Christian will assuredly delight in such views of the eternal world, according to the degree in which he can realize them to his mind, and is persuaded that these glories await him; that is, in ordinary cases in proportion as he gives himself to prayer. If it be through the medium of prayer, that the blessings of the Holy Spirit are usually imparted, enabling the believer to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of God: if by prayer he holds intercourse with the Father of Mercies, and communion with the saints, and mounting up as on eagles' wings to the fountain of light, has his conversation in heaven; if it be thus that his faith is invigorated, his soul purified, his spiritual vision strengthened, his prospects enlarged, his hope confirmed, how incumbent is it upon him to be instant and fervent in prayer! Thus it was, that the faith of the patriarchs was maintained, and that they confessed themselves to be strangers and pilgrims on the earth;

thus that the faith of the disciples failed not; thus that the poor persecuted members of the primitive church were enabled to persevere under manifold temptations; and thus it is in every age of the church, that the Christian, by the confirmation of his faith, is taught, under all the trials of this probationary state, to look onward to that "rest which remaineth for the people of God." If the pious author of this volume would grant us the liberty, we doubt not that we might justly appeal to herself, as a living witness of the value and efficacy of prayer, and ask whether she has not herself found in it the consolations which she has so well described. Whether, even in that recent dispensation of Providence which has taken away her only remaining sister, to her the last affectionate survivor of an affectionate family, united by bonds too close to be broken except by that stroke which dissevers all earthly relations;—whether, even in that afflictive appointment, which, by leaving her alone, has, according to the world's views, left her in desolate bereavement, she could not then find a refuge and consolation in prayer;—whether there did not seem to issue from the Throne of Grace a voice, exhorting her not to be sorry, as men without hope, for them that sleep in Jesus, but rather to rejoice in the persuasion, that another kindred spirit was now added to the company of heaven, and to expect for herself the same blessed consummation in the kingdom of her Father and her God? But upon this subject we forbear to enlarge; and it is unnecessary to add any thing in recommendation of the work which has called forth these remarks. That it will be very generally read, no person who is acquainted with the influence of Mrs. More's name and character can possibly doubt. We sincerely trust that its utility may correspond with the best wishes of its respected author.

LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INTELLIGENCE, *&c. &c.*

GREAT BRITAIN.

PREPARING for publication:—Two Months' Residence in Rome, by Mrs. Graham;—Mineral Geography of the South Downs, by G. Mantell;—The Fall of Paraguay, by Robert Southey;—A Greek and English Lexicon, by Dr. Jones;—Remarks on a Sermon of Mr. Belsham, by the Rev. H. Carter.

In the press:—Memoirs of Dr. Nicholls, Dean of Middleham;—A Synopsis of Hebrew Grammar with Points, by Mr. Goodhugh;—The Providence of God, by the Rev. G. Croly;—Ward's History, Literature, Religion, and Customs of the Hindoos, vol. III. and IV;—Constitutional Remarks, addressed to the People of Great Britain, on the late Trial of Richard Carlile, for republishing Paine's "Age of Reason;" in six Parts; by a Member of Gray's Inn.

The author of *Horæ Homileticæ*, finding that he cannot easily attain his object of making the first four volumes of his work pay for the next four, and those afterwards for the last three, intends to issue them in two parcels only, instead of three, and to publish them all as soon possible; the first six volumes at Christmas, and the last five volumes in the spring. Whilst this will put them into the hands of the subscribers much sooner than was contemplated on the former plan, it will expedite the returns of the profits, which are to be entirely devoted to charitable and religious uses.

Diocese of St. David's.—The Church Union Society's Prizes for this year are adjudged as follow:—The premium (by benefaction) of 50*l.* to the Rev. Harvey Marriott, of Claverton, for the best Essay "on the Madras System of Education, its powers, its application to Classical Schools, and its utility as an instrument to form the principles and habits of youth in the higher orders of society."—A gratuity of 10*l.* to Mr. T. Hogg, master of the grammar-school in Truro, for the second best Essay on the same subject.—A premium of 25*l.* to the Rev. J. Morres, of Nether-Broughton, Leicestershire, for the best Essay "on the Scriptural Evidence of the Doctrine of proportionate Rewards in the next Life, considered as a motive to duty, an impulse to zealous and faithful service, a ground of hope, a source of pious gratitude and of

humility, and, through the promises of the Gospel, an earnest of final acceptableness with God for Christ's sake."

In opening a vault in St. Mary's Church, Oxford, the coffin of Dr. Radcliffe, the munificent benefactor to that university, has been discovered. The spot where he was buried was not marked by any inscription, and was quite unknown till this discovery was made.

A patent has been taken out, for condensing carburetted hydrogen gas in a portable vessel, so as to afford a convenient moveable gas light. A vessel containing three quarts of concentrated gas, will afford a good light for an evening.

We have frequently referred to the useful operations of the Society for the Suppression of Mendicancy which was established in London, March 25, 1818, under very high and honourable patronage, and continues to be supported by voluntary contributions. It may be useful to some of our readers to state, that the plan of this institution is to issue printed tickets for distribution to Street Beggars, which tickets refer them to the Society's house, where they are immediately supplied with food, and a statement of the case of each is registered. The truth of this statement is afterwards ascertained by personal investigation and inquiry, and the case is then disposed of according to circumstances.—The Society has already done much good. Its members have had the satisfaction of rescuing many really deserving objects from wretchedness and misery, whilst at the same time they have exposed and brought to justice a considerable number of daring impostors, who infested and disgraced the streets of the metropolis, and who were living in habits of drunkenness and riot with the sums daily bestowed upon them from a mistaken humanity. They have repeatedly entreated the public to assist their endeavours by purchasing and distributing their tickets, and discontinuing altogether the present impolitic practice of indiscriminate almsgiving. If this object were once attained, the sturdy beggar would be compelled to work, as the most artful imposture could be of no avail—the employment of children in begging (one great cause of juvenile crime,) would be terminated—the indecent exposures in our public streets would cease—the most re-

volting features of the present system would gradually disappear, and the wretchedness, indolence, and vice of a numerous class of our fellow-creatures, might in the course of time give place to habits of industry and virtue.

An annual payment of one guinea constitutes the donor a Governor of the Society; and the payment of ten guineas at one time, or within one year, a Life Governor. Governors are entitled to tickets of reference gratuitously: to other persons they are sold in parcels of five, at the charge of one shilling.

Subscriptions are received at the Society's House, 13, Red Lion Square, Holborn, and at all the London Bankers.

The beggars in London have been estimated at 15,000, of whom 2000 are children: a great proportion are delinquents,

and a great part of these are out-door apprentices.

France.—The cardinals, archbishops, and bishops of France, have addressed a letter to the papal see, filled with reflections, of a melancholy nature, on their own lot, on that of the Gallican church, and of religion generally within the French empire. The letter complains that the clerical function has been weakened, and brought into disrepute; and that impious books spread abroad derision, satire, calumnies, and the most pernicious doctrines, against *all* religion.

We have received the prospectus of a monthly publication, to be entitled, "*Annales Protestantes*;" with a view to the defence of the Reformed Church. The price is to be 6 francs for three months; or 11 for six; or 20 for the year.

LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THEOLOGY.

Musæ Biblicæ; or, the Poetry of the Bible. Foolscap. 6s.

Clappe's Sermons. 3 vols. 8vo. 1*l*. 7s.

Evidences of Christianity; by Moir. 3s. 6d.

Discourses on several Subjects and Occasions; by Wm. Hett, M.A. 2 vols. 8vo. 18s.

Obedience to Government a religious Duty; a Sermon; by the Rev. S. H. Cassan. 8vo. 1s. 6d.

The Holy Bible and Testament, in Italian, from the edition of Diodate, revised and corrected by Rolandi. 8vo. 1*l*. 4s.—The Testament separate. 8s.

Seven Letters by a Friend on Primitive Christianity; by John Walker. 2s.

The Poor Girl's Help to a Knowledge of the first Principles of the Christian Religion; by E. Appleton. 18mo. 2s.

A Sermon, preached in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, June 1818; by the Rev. James Hook. 2s.

A Charge, delivered to the Rev. the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Sarum, at his Visitation in July 1819; by the Rev. Charles Daubeny. 2s. 6d.

A System of Theology, in a Series of Sermons; by the late Timothy Dwight, with a Life and Portrait of the Author. 5 vols. 8vo.

A Sermon, preached in the Parish Church of Burnham, the Sunday after the Execu-

tion of Thomas Mitchell, who was executed for an Attempt to murder Miss Rowls; by the Rev. H. Raikes, of the Vicarage, Burnham. 1s.

A Sermon, preached in the Parish Church of Burnham, the Sunday following the day Thomas Mitchell attempted the Murder of Miss Rowls; by the same Author. Published at the Request of the Parish. 1s.

Homilies for the Young; by the Rev. H. Marriott. 5s. 6d.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Sketch of a Tour in the Highlands of Scotland in the Autumn of 1818. 8vo. 9s. 6d.

A Topographical and Historical Account of the City of Norwich. 12mo. 4s. demy 8vo. with plan of the city. 8s. 6d.

Part I. of the History of the University of Dublin, illustrated by thirty coloured plates, by eminent Artists, from drawings; by W. B. Taylor. 10s. 5d.

The Sufferings and Fate of the Expedition which sailed from England in November 1817, to the Rivers Oronooko and Apure; by G. Hippiusley, Esq. 8vo. 15s.

Narrative of the Expedition which sailed from England at the Close of 1817, for the Service of the Spanish Patriots; by C. Brown. 8vo. 7s. 6d.

Travels in Morocco; with an Account of the British Embassy to the Court of Morocco under the late G. Payne, Esq.,

Consul-general; by Col. Keatinge. With thirty-four plates. 4to. 3l. 3s.

The History and Antiquities of the Cathedral of York; by Mr. Britton. 4to. with thirty-five engravings.

Memoirs of the late Miss Emma Humphries, of Frome, Somerset; by the Rev. J. East, of Birmingham. 5s.

A Memoir of Charles Louis Sand; with a Defence of the German Universities. 8vo. 5s. 6d.

A Geological Map of the Great Mining

District of Cornwall; by R. Thomas. 1l. 12s.

On the Commerce of St. Petersburg; by Borisson. 8vo. 8s.

Juvenile Miscellany; by Humber. 12mo. 3s.

Early Blossoms, or Biographical Notices of Candidates for Literary Distinction who died in their Youth, with Specimens of their respective Talents; by J. Styles, D.D. 12mo. 5s.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

MORAVIAN MISSIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

AN erroneous statement having appeared of the mode in which the Sunday is kept by the members of the Moravian settlements in South Africa, we copy the following statement, which has been drawn up in reply to the charge.

"The manner of spending the Sunday, at Gnadenthal and Groenekloof is the following, unless circumstances should occasion an unavoidable change. At 9 in the forenoon the Litany is prayed. At 10 is the public sermon, after which the baptism of children takes place. At 3 there is another service, which varies: on one of the four Sundays in the lunar month, the Lord's Supper is administered; on another the baptism of adults, accompanied with suitable services. In the evening the missionaries meet for reading and prayer. Besides the daily evening worship, a meeting is held every day of the week for one of the different classes of the congregation.

"Those who are acquainted with the situation of slaves, and with the civil regulations which obtain in countries where slavery prevails, will not expect the Brethren to have it in their power to prevent them from doing any manner of work on Sundays, when compelled by their unchristian masters; but the service of the church, which is regulated so as to suit their time, is so well attended in most places, that there is little reason to complain. Nor can they interfere with Hottentots, who in some respects are more unfavourably situated than slaves, and, after Divine service, are obliged to return many miles to distant

farms, to be ready for their work early on Monday morning.

"Violation of the Sabbath is always a subject of due animadversion, and various regulations are made from time to time to enable the Hottentots to keep it more strictly. In some instances, where they are compelled by their masters to work, from an early hour on Monday morning to a late hour on Saturday night, at the farms, while their families remaining in the settlement are dependent on them for support, a Hottentot may be seen walking in his garden between the Divine services, and occasionally paying some trifling attention to his plants or hedges, which may be considered under such circumstances as coming within the description of the works of necessity permitted by our Lord to be done by his own disciples. The shops, however, are always shut, and no opportunity is allowed to exercise any trade taught in the settlement."

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Our readers have been apprised of Mr. Jowett's intention to visit Egypt and Palestine, in order to investigate the state of those countries, with a view to the formation of missionary establishments and the circulation of the Scriptures.

On the 10th of December last, Mr. Jowett left Malta for Alexandria, and reached that city on the 19th.

He paid an early visit to the convents of the Copts, the Latins, and the Greeks; and has sent home much information respecting Alexandria, Egypt in general, and the plans of the Bashaw.

During his stay at the Consulate, Mr. Jowett preached there on Sundays, to such Christians as wished to assemble for Divine worship.

From Alexandria he proceeded to Cairo. It was an object of the first importance with him to have an interview with Mr. Salt, the British Consul-General for Egypt; and to obtain his assistance and countenance in the prosecution of the objects of his voyage. Mr. Salt being at this time in Nubia, Mr. Jowett determined to proceed up the Nile in order to obtain a conference with him. With great reluctance he gave up the hope of being present at the approaching Passover at Jerusalem; but his disappointment therein has been amply compensated, by the opening of unexpected opportunities of prosecuting the Society's plans in behalf of the almost expiring church of Abyssinia.

While the publication of the Scriptures in Ethiopia will be of great probable influence on the Abyssinian priests, the preparation and circulation of them in the vernacular tongue of the country must be regarded as the main instrument of enlightening the body of the people. It appears, from Mr. Jowett's communications, that there are two distinct dialects of the vernacular tongue—the Amharic and the Tigrè. M. Asselin, French Consul in Egypt, procured some years since, by the help of an Abyssinian, the translation of some portion of the Old Testament into the vernacular tongue. There is now reason to hope that the work will be prosecuted under advantageous circumstances, as may be gathered from the following extracts of Mr. Jowett's communications.

“Cairo, Feb. 4, 1819.

“The subject of Abyssinian Translation shall not drop. If God spare my life, in two or three months I shall be returned from Mr. Salt. Nothing can be done, till I have fully consulted with him. Rest assured, now I am on the spot, I will spare no pains to press the business home.

“My chief expectations, in the execution of this work, are from Pearce. He is an extraordinary character. After a variety of wanderings, in which he visited Russia, China, and other countries—once a Musselman in Arabia, and then fourteen years a Christian and a warrior in Abyssinia—now hardly escaped, and lodged in the British Consulate! His genius is very great—his education sufficient for an educated man to work upon. He cannot bear to be idle. He is thirty-nine years of age.

Christ. Observ. No. 214.

Had he the bodily constitution of his youth, he would break out afresh perhaps, and run through the same marvellously eventful life. But God has broken him down—in mercy, I think, not in wrath; in mercy, more especially, to the Abyssinians, whom he has it in his power, and in his disposition, exceedingly to benefit, by turning his talents to the translation of the Scriptures. He can speak and write both Amharic and Tigrè.

“He will accompany us on our voyage up the Nile. I hope, during the voyage, to procure the translation of one Gospel into the spoken language of Amhara and Tigrè. He has brought me a few verses of the Gospel of St. Mark, pencilled in the Tigrè language. It is very fair: as good, perhaps, as Cannòlo's first beginnings. Many words are Arabic.”

A few days afterward, Mr. Jowett writes—

“Yesterday Pearce began translating St. Mark into Tigrè, and did thirty-two verses. I have analyzed a part, and find the language to be very Arabic. He works well and cheerfully.”

Mr. Fuller accompanied Mr. Jowett in his voyage up the Nile. About two months were occupied in the voyage: Mr. Jowett returned to Cairo in the early part of April.

Having reached the island of Philoë, near the first cataract, he met Mr. Salt there, who entered with great readiness into his views respecting Mr. Pearce. On this subject Mr. Jowett writes, under date of March 19th, from Esne, on his return down the Nile—

“Mr. Salt—I am truly thankful to God for it—is favourable to my proposals. This circumstance will, as I supposed, quite change the line of my travels, or rather cut it short. I have taken up Ethiopic in good earnest, and have the necessary books with me. By July or August I hope to prepare one or two of the Gospels. I shall then return to Malta.”

From Mr. Jowett's communications from Egypt, we shall subjoin one or two more extracts—

“The Coptic Patriarch has given me a letter of recommendation to all the churches and convents in Upper Egypt, as far as I may have occasion to travel. By the time of my return he will have prepared four volumes, in manuscript; each of which

is to contain one Gospel in Coptic, and the Arabic in a parallel column; that is, the four Gospels in all. Each volume will be a tolerably-sized quarto, and will cost thirty piastres; equal to fifteen shillings sterling. The whole will be, therefore, 3*l*. I have also directed copies to be made in Arabic alone.

"I have received 400 piastres, at once, for twenty Arabic Bibles. It is the lay head of the Coptic Church who buys these Bibles so plentifully. He would take any quantity. I told him I could spare him no more, as I meant to distribute the rest right and left up the Nile. He begged at least five more; which I agreed to. I take about two dollars each for them. Money is scarce, and labour and provisions plentiful in this country. Talking with him, one evening, our conversation fell on the marriage of priests, in which their church agrees with ours. As I happened to have a long letter from Mrs. Jowett in my pocket, I drew it out: they were perfectly astonished to see a priest's wife so learned! He told me that there were 20,000 Copts in Egypt. In Cairo, about 1500."

A seasonable supply of Arabic Bibles had been received at Alexandria. When Mr. Jowett was there, the Consul opened two cases, which were in his store, addressed to Mr. Salt. There were about 100 copies, which were forwarded, as appeared from a letter of the Rev. Anthony Hamilton, dated London, April 22, 1817, by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

The Bashaw has sent to the continent, by way of Alexandria, eighteen or twenty Copts from Rosetta, for the benefit of European education.

On Mr. Jowett's arrival off Old Cairo, from his voyage up the Nile, he heard that the plague had reached Cairo; and wrote, therefore, to Mr. Salt, who had arrived at the Consulate in Cairo, to ask his advice how to proceed. Mr. Salt immediately sent his horse and Janissary, in order to convey him to the Consulate. The Bashaw, aware of the fatal effects of the usual negligence of the natives with respect to the plague, and of the security generally attending the precautions of the Europeans, has established quarantine; but the Arabs regard this salutary order as an innovation.

After visiting the convents at Alexandria, Mr. Jowett writes—

"I have now paid my first visit to the three principal Christian establishments—the Coptic, the Latin, and the Greek. They are built within five minutes' walk of one another, on a large open space, without the inner and within the outer walls, which was the site of the old city. Here, as you ride over the unequal and dusty ground, you see multitudes of Bedouin Arabs, clad in nothing more than a coarse long shirt, and generally a large wrapper about their bodies, digging among the subterraneous ruins, to procure the large square stones found among them, which the Bashaw uses in building. Their employment is a fit emblem of mine. Among the ruins of the Christian Churches, I am exploring and looking for some valuable remains, by the help of which the Church of our Redeemer may be built again."

Mr. Jowett bears strong testimony to the avidity with which the Scriptures were received by the natives in various parts of Egypt which he visited.

RELIGIOUS TRACTS IN CHINESE.

Mr. Milne writes from China—

"To our former tracts we have added the following:—

"A 'Catechism for Youth,' containing 165 questions, intended to give, in a plain and easy style, a summary view of the doctrines and duties of Christianity. It contains also a preface, and two short forms of prayer at the close.

"A tract on the 'Vanity of Idols,' (Psalm cxv.) which was written in Canton, during my stay there, in October last, and sent down to be printed at Malacca.

"An 'Exposition of the Lord's Prayer.' This is just finished; and will, I hope, be printed during the spring. It is large; but it is divided into ten short sections, or lectures, seven of which were delivered, by me, on Thursday evenings, at Malacca, to a few Chinese.

"The 'Morning and Evening Prayers of the Church of England,' with the 'Psalter,' bound together; translated by Dr. Morrison, in the autumn of last year, and printed in a neat pocket size, at the expense of the London Missionary Society."

The number of Chinese tracts and

pamphlets composed, printed, and circulated by this mission, since its commencement, is considerably more than thirty-six thousand, and of above twelve different kinds. The blocks of these (that is, the stereotype wooden plates) all remain good; and will bear to throw off many thousands, without any repair.

Several other tracts and treatises are projected and begun. A course of "Evening Conversations," or "Polemical Dialogues," in which the idolatry, superstition, false philosophy, and iniquitous practices of the Chinese will be discussed, has been commenced by Mr. Milne, and will form two small volumes.

VIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

DOMESTIC.

THE view which we ventured to take, in our last Number, of the transactions at Manchester, and of the state of the country generally, has excited no small clamour among a few democratic religionists, and has drawn upon us the indignation of some of the radical reformers who are not religionists. Even the *Morning Chronicle* has condescended to bring us into notice, by stigmatizing our observations as inconsistent with all claims to the Christian character.* We certainly claim to understand what befits that character, at least as well as the conductor of this journal; and we conceive that we are doing no more than our duty as Christians in endeavouring to stem the tide of popular delusion and uphold the cause of order and good government, and in inducing our readers to act the just and sensible part of not condemning a man before they have heard his

defence. We have no hesitation in stating, that all which has since occurred has only tended to confirm the general view we then ventured to express, both respecting the proceedings at Manchester and the political dangers which environ us. On this last point, there appears to be a growing conviction, on the part both of the government and the public, that there exists serious ground of alarm. It is no longer possible, indeed, to resist the evidence to this effect which is daily accumulating upon us; and we are at length told from unquestionable authority, that such is regarded as the urgency of the case that the military force of the country is about to receive a large augmentation, with a view to the more effectual counteraction of the rebellious purposes of the disaffected. Nor can even this strong measure be considered as premature, when the right and the duty of arming to assert their wild and extravagant pretensions is openly proclaimed by our radical reformers; and when this lawless doctrine is practically followed up by military training, and the preparation of weapons of offence.

*The Editor of the *Morning Chronicle* has thought fit, from motives which we will not pretend to analyze, to hold up to the vengeance of the radical reformers the Rev. Daniel Wilson, as the probable author of the obnoxious article. Even if the supposition had been correct, we think the Editor might have spared this invidious designation of an individual as the mark of popular resentment. But it is utterly false. The contributions of Mr. Daniel Wilson would indeed be no discredit to any publication, however high its literary pretensions. But certainly we cannot boast of his ever having written a line in ours, which had any relation to politics; and we have to lament that several years have elapsed since his increasing engagements have permitted him to render us his valuable aid in any department of our labours.

At a period of such emergency it must be satisfactory to every man who has at heart the preservation of the public tranquillity, to learn that parliament has been summoned to assemble on the 23d of November. The object of this early meeting is, doubtless, to consider the critical and alarming state of the country, and to raise up some additional barriers against the dangers which menace our internal repose. One of their first duties, we apprehend, will be to regulate the right which our demagogues assume of collecting immense multitudes of men together, for political purposes; and to provide, that however legal may be the pretext which

draws them together, the constitution shall be protected from assault, and the various authorities of the state from intimidation. The attitude of defiance which public meetings have lately exhibited, their martial port, and their loudly proclaimed views of hostility to our best and most cherished institutions, are wholly incompatible with the efficiency, and even with the safety of government, or with the peace and happiness of society. No government can long subsist under such a regimen; a truth of which the promoters of these meetings are well aware. They know, that if they can themselves gain the ear of the people, while they suppress, by clamour and intimidation, every opposing sentiment, there is no degree of contempt and hatred which they may not succeed in exciting towards our rulers, as well as towards the whole of the upper ranks of the community; and that if such feelings should once become general, their end is achieved: a revolution must inevitably follow.—The wisdom of Parliament, we trust, will be applied to arrest the progress of this evil.

Another duty of Parliament will be to provide some additional restraints on the licentiousness of the press—a still more efficient instrument than even the meetings to which we have alluded, in sapping the very foundations of our social existence. Blasphemous and seditious tracts have flowed upon us lately in such profusion, as to indicate a hope, on the part of their authors, of carrying the public mind, as it were, by a *coup de main*, before the friends of virtue, religion, and good government can prepare themselves for resistance. As for the law, in its present state, it is wholly unequal to cope with them. Carlile, it is true, has been found guilty of libel, by a jury of his countrymen, as the vender of two blasphemous publications; and we are thankful for the verdict: but it is to be feared that the manner in which the trials have been conducted has only served to spread the pollution more widely, while even their successful result has not tended in the smallest degree to check the circulation of the condemned works. Not only the indictments, but even the verdicts seem now to be calculated upon as indubitably yielding a sure profit to the criminal. They serve the purpose of an extensive advertisement, and they so sharpen the avidity to purchase, that the advantage

produced by a trial and conviction may be fairly estimated as likely far to overbalance the weight of the punishment. The fine and imprisonment (if by some mishap they should, in a particular instance, be incurred,) are thus regarded as forming but one of the charges of trade, a moderate premium of insurance, which forms but a slight deduction from the amount of the gain.—Many persons, doubtless, consoled themselves with thinking that the verdict of guilty pronounced upon Carlile would at once stop the circulation of the books thus judicially and solemnly condemned, and infuse terror into the venders of other blasphemous works. No such thing. On the contrary, an increased activity has been given to their circulation: even the blasphemies of Paine are sold as freely and unreservedly as before; and his own “mock trial” is triumphantly advertised by Carlile, in conspicuous characters, in the very street through which the judges must pass in going to Guildhall. The tardy process of the law, in cases of libel, is peculiarly favourable to the success of the iniquitous boldness of such a speculation as this.—For after an indictment has been found by a grand jury, a twelvemonth or more may elapse before it is brought to trial. During this time the work circulates without restraint. And even if a verdict of guilty should be obtained, and the criminal should still choose to persist in the course which had led to his conviction, the same lapse of time must again intervene, as the law now stands, before he can again be brought to trial. This is an enormous evil, and it calls for a speedy and efficacious remedy, if we would preserve from utter dissolution the very principles, the *ima fundamina*, of moral conduct, and of civil subordination.

We are fully aware of the just apprehensions which will naturally be entertained of any interference with the freedom of public discussion, and we ourselves participate in them. But surely it is possible to preserve this invaluable privilege in all its revered immunities, and yet protect the public mind against the contamination and corruption of such pestilential works as now deluge the land. In cases of *private* wrong, the Lord Chancellor has the power, on the production of ex-parte evidence, of issuing an injunction to restrain the injurious publi-

cation. Would it be unreasonable that the public interest should enjoy an analogous protection? Whether it might not be expedient to visit certain classes of libel with a severer punishment than is now inflicted we will not inquire; but surely under the novel circumstances of our situation, it would seem to be not only proper, but absolutely necessary, that from the moment a grand jury has found a work to be libellous, the Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench should be empowered to issue an injunction to restrain its sale or circulation, until its criminality or innocence shall have been legally decided; and that having once been pronounced criminal, the mere fact of publication, when proved, should thenceforward subject the offender to punishment. Some such regulations seem to us to be imperiously called for, otherwise such trials as those of *Carline* will become indeed "mock trials;" and the law will fall into utter contempt. Whether provision should be made for seizing and destroying the remaining copies of works pronounced criminal, will also merit consideration.

And now that we are on the subject of the press, we cannot help adverting to the impolitic and improvident conduct pursued by the legislature in 1799, in rejecting the bill proposed by Lord Grosvenor, to suppress Sunday newspapers. Mr. Pitt and Mr. Windham were unfriendly to the measure, and it failed. The trade was then in its infancy, and might have been interdicted with slight inconvenience. It has since grown to an enormous height, and has contributed more than, perhaps, any other single circumstance which can be named, to the dissemination in and about the metropolis of disloyalty and irreligion.* We have, in this instance, dearly paid the forfeit of our disregard to the laws of God; and if we were wise, we should even now retrace our steps. How can we expect the favour and protection of Heaven, if we ourselves neglect our plain and obvious duties?

* We admit that a doubt may be fairly indulged whether gin-shops may not have contributed in at least as large measure as Sunday newspapers to these evils. However this may be, the malign influence of the one is doubtless aggravated by the other.

Parliament, we also trust, will now see the necessity of adopting some strong measures for extending the benefits of a sound and Christian education to every cottage in the kingdom. It is one of the refinements in wickedness which the present day has witnessed, that elementary schools should be formed, where children, with their letters, are taught lessons of sedition and blasphemy. It is incumbent upon us not merely to suppress such diabolical inventions, but to leave no room for them. It is incumbent upon us to make the right education of the community a matter of high national concern. We are bound not only to give additional facilities for the formation of schools wherever they are wanted; but we are bound to see that the schools are instituted, and the children who frequent them rightly taught. This is an affair of vital moment, which we have too long shamefully neglected. Can any subject be more worthy of the mature consideration of our ablest politicians and moralists, than how to improve our system of education, so as to render it an efficient instrument in promoting the virtue and happiness of the community; in enlarging their minds and improving their habits, and rectifying their principles; in making them peaceful and industrious citizens, and devout and conscientious Christians. To teach a man to read and to write is doing comparatively little for his intellectual and moral improvement.—We should here take a lesson from renovated France. A number of her ablest and most enlightened characters are now formed into a board for superintending and directing the progress of national instruction. The plans to be pursued, the books to be read, the rules to be framed, are subjected to their deliberation. To them reports are made, by them inquiries are instituted, and rewards are assigned; and in the prosecution of their object, their hands are strengthened by the unhesitating support and cordial concurrence of the government.* The zeal and intelligence which this board has displayed, are only equalled

* A periodical work appears every month in Paris, entitled *Le Journal d'Education*, which emanates from the above-mentioned board, and which contains a mass of most important information on the subject of education in general, as well as on its progress in France. The energy and success with which the object is pursued merit the warmest applause.

by the success which appears to crown its judicious and disinterested labours. Its history furnishes the highest encouragement (second, indeed, only to that which Scotland has long furnished,) to stimulate our exertions in the same course: and with such an example before our eyes, we are scarcely permitted to doubt their efficacy.

We must candidly own, however, that even from all these measures, expedient as they doubtless are in themselves, we should expect to derive but comparatively slender and temporary advantages, if some comprehensive legislative provision be not adopted for ameliorating our system of Poor Laws. The multiplied evils which have sprung from this system are so fully, and so satisfactorily detailed in the Reports of the two Houses of Parliament, that it is wholly unnecessary to enlarge on the subject. We are authorized by those luminous expositions in tracing to this source much of the moral degradation, the improvidence and profligacy, of the labouring classes, and even much of their growing distress; and if so, without doubt, much of the wide-spread disaffection to the government, which that distress is insidiously employed to foster. We pretend not to say what are the precise remedial measures which Parliament ought to adopt, but surely the reports to which we have alluded should not continue to reproach our supineness and indifference. They bring to our view a disease of admitted malignity, which has attacked the very vitals of the state. Whether the remedies they recommend are the best that can be proposed, we know not; but they seem to deserve a trial. In the mean time, something effectual should be done, to stop the further progress of the malady, until the whole system shall have undergone a calm, deliberate, dispassionate revision.

The practical operation of the Poor Laws is briefly this: that every parish of the kingdom may be compelled to find money to supply the wants, not only of the impotent poor, but of every individual who is thrown out of employment, or the wages of whose labour are inadequate to the support of himself and his family. Now what we would propose as a temporary substitute for the present mischievous system is, that means should be devised for giving

work to every individual capable of it, and who cannot earn a subsistence by his ordinary line of employment; and having done this, to enact that no such person should thenceforward be entitled to relief, except in the shape of wages paid for effective labour.

But is such work to be found? We think it is. We think that an adequate supply of beneficial employment might be easily found; and that for years to come the single object of improving the roads, public and private, throughout the kingdom, might abundantly occupy every hand whom the fluctuations of our trade might from time to time reduce to circumstances of distress. The roads in their present state occupy a certain number of labourers; and these would still continue to be employed upon them. They would admit, however, of almost indefinite improvement; and to this improvement might be directed with immense advantage to the public, as well as to themselves, the occasional labour of those whom temporary causes should throw out of their ordinary line of employment. And when the actual state, not only of the great and cross-roads, but of the parish and by-roads throughout the kingdom, is compared with the state of perfection to which they are capable of being brought by the skilful application of the labour of man, it cannot be denied, that in the improvement of these roads a most extensive fund of beneficial labour might be provided for the relief of partial or temporary distress. The plans of improvement might also be so judiciously and providently framed, that they might at any time be interrupted, and afterwards resumed without inconvenience. The moment the pressure ceased, and the ordinary demand for labour revived, the public labour might be suspended, to be again had recourse to only when the circumstances of the particular district required such a measure of relief. By fixing the wages to be paid these public labourers at a very moderate rate, at a rate something below the medium rate of ordinary labour, they would have a strong inducement given them to resume their wonted employment, the moment the pressure upon it had been removed. The public work being intended merely as a measure of relief, its very object would be defeated if wages were given which would prevent private employers from

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obtaining labourers at a fair and equitable rate. At the same time it is obvious, that if such a plan could be adopted and steadily pursued, the severe distress which is occasionally experienced in some parts of the kingdom might to a great degree be prevented, as it would keep the wages of labour from ever sinking so low as to be inadequate to the support of the labourer.

We are aware of objections that may be raised, both in principle and in practice, to the measure now proposed, but they do not appear to us to be by any means insuperable. In point of principle it is surely less objectionable than the present mode of compulsory relief. To provide regular labour for those who are capable of it, is surely a far better plan than to provide them with the means of living in total or even partial inaction. It is only necessary that a part of the money now given to support men in idleness should be applied to the payment of productive labour. The very effect which such an expedient would have in keeping up the wages of labour generally throughout the country would lessen the demand on the Poor Rates; so that less money would probably be required, on the whole, by the proposed arrangement, if judiciously conducted, than is now necessary to eke out the miserable pittance, to which in some districts the wages of labour are occasionally depressed. But, even if the expense should be greater than is now incurred by the Poor Rates, the proposed measure would still be preferable. The present mode of compulsory relief is not only unproductive, but absolutely and extensively hurtful. That which has been suggested, would at least preserve the character of the labouring classes from the overwhelming degradation of pauperism: and it would at the same time produce a beneficial return for the capital expended. Every substantial improvement in the roads

of a district, would not only add to the comfort of all its inhabitants, but to the general wealth. The very saving in the wear and tear of horses, wagons, carts, &c. and in the time of those who attend them, would be a real profit speedily realized by the great body of contributors to the Poor's Rate.

The difficulties which present themselves in the details of such a measure are certainly formidable; and if the plan were left to be administered by the ordinary parochial authorities, we should admit that they were insurmountable. But it ought not to be so left: it ought to be placed in the hands of the associated intelligence of each county, or division of a county; in the hands, for example, of the gentlemen composing the magistracy and the grand inquest of the district, and who should exercise an active superintendence over the agents required for conducting it. The difficulties, we have admitted, are great; but we must not shrink from encountering them, if we wish to effect the preservation of all that is dear to us; and this, we are persuaded, essentially depends on our devising an adequate remedy for the overwhelming distress, which occasionally prevails in particular districts. Nothing effectual, however, can be done without some new legislative provisions adapted to the circumstances of the case.

But we have neither time nor space to enlarge on the subject. We must leave it for the present to the consideration of our readers, with the expression of our anxious hope, and with our earnest prayers, that God would inspire the great council of the nation with wisdom to devise, and firmness to pursue, such measures as are best calculated to promote His glory and the true happiness of every class of the community.

ECCLESIASTICAL PREFERMENTS.

Rev. John Bishop, B.A. a Minor Canon of Gloucester Cathedral.

Rev. Henry Charles Hobart, M.A. Bishop's Prebendary in Hereford Cathedral.

Rev. Henry Faulkner, North Piddle R. co. Worcester.

Rev. Robert Roberts, M.A. (Vicar of Haverhill, Suffolk) Little Thurlow R. in the same county.

Rev. Orbel Rey, Wyverstone R. Suffolk.

Rev. Mr. Worsley, of Gatcombe, R. Kingston V. Isle of Wight.

Rev. Richard Henry Gretton, M.A. Nantwich R. Cheshire.

Rev. Richard W. Hutchins, B.D. Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, New Shoreham V. Sussex.

Rev. John Hewlett, B.D., preacher at the Foundling Hospital, London, Hilgay R. Norfolk; the said rectory being legally void, and come to the Crown, by reason of simony.

Rev. H. Randolph, Marcham V. Berks.

Rev. G. Powell, M.A. Duloe Sinécure R. Cornwall.

Rev. R. Hewitt, M.A. (Vicar of Lever, in Lancashire) Westhorpe R. Suffolk.

Rev. Dr. Gauntlett, Warden of New Col-

lege, and Vicar of Portsea, to a Prebend in St. Paul's Cathedral

Rev. Wm. Harby, B.D. and Fellow of Lincoln College, Leighs Magna R.co. Essex.

Rev. Henry Charles Morgan, M.A. Winstone R. Gloucestershire.

Rev. J. J. Brasier, LL.B. of Trinity College, Cambridge, Rector of Whitmore, co. Stafford, Cleobury North R. Shropshire.

Rev. J. D. Churchill, Erpingham R. Norfolk

Rev. E. Owen, M.A. Chislet V. Kent.

Rev. R. Knight, jun. Newton Nottage R. Glamorganshire

The Earl of Shaftsbury has appointed the Rev. E. Davies, Master of the Free Grammar School, Dorsetshire, one of his Domestic Chaplains.

Rev. William Cornforth, M.A. Fellow of Magdalen College, Cambridge, Longstanton St. Michael's R. Cambridgeshire.

Rev. James Donne, B.A. of St. John's College, Cambridge, licensed to the Perpetual Curacy of South Carleton, Lincolnshire.

Rev. W. S. Goddard, D.D. to Kingstone R. Isle of Wight.

Rev. Richard Carlton, A.M. Nately Scures R. Hants.

Rev. Robert Rolfe, A.B. of Saham Toney, Hampnall V. Norfolk.

Rev. Henry W. Johnson Beauchamp, M.A. Laton V. with Eisey V. annexed, Wilts.

Rev. John Anthony Partridge, A.B. Town Barningham R. Norfolk.

Rev. J. Stoddart, M.A. Fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge, to the Mediety of Patishall V. Northamptonshire.

Rev. I. W. Jones, B.A. of All Souls' College, to Shropton, co. Derby.

Rev. C. Wetherell, M.A. Byfield R. Northamptonshire.

Rev. P. Penson, Minor Canon and Precentor of Durham Cathedral, St. Oswald's V. in that city.

Rev. M. Rowlandson, D.D. Monkton-Farleigh R. Wilts.

Rev. Francis Thurland, M.A. Chaplain of New College, Oxford, appointed a Minor Canon of the Cathedral of Durham,

DISPENSATIONS.

Rev. Samuel Heyrick, M.A. to hold Brampton by Dingley R. with Carlton R. both in Northamptonshire.

Rev. Henry Bower, M.A. St. Mary Magdalen V. Taunton, with Staple Fitz Paine R. Somerset.

Rev. T. T. Walmsley, B.D. St. Vedast, Foster-lane R. London, with Hanwell R.

Rev. Caleb Rockett, M.A. one of the Domestic Chaplains of the Bishop of Bath and Wells, to the Living of Weston Zoyland, with that of East Brent, co. Somerset.

Rev. John Henry Sparke, M.A. Prebendary of Ely, to hold the Rectory of Cottenham, in Cambridgeshire, together with the Rectory of Stretham, in the Isle of Ely.

Rev. Wm. Barker, M.A. Rector of Silverton, Devon, to hold Broad Clist V. in the same county.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

N. R. ; H. ; C. T. C. ; A. H. ; A PARENT ; MINIMUS ; and EDINENSIS, are under consideration.

T. Y. S. observes, that CLERICUS DERBIENSIS has been misled by the ambiguous wording and punctuation of Mr. Jackson's advertisement. (See our last Number, p. 583.) It does not appear that the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge has sanctioned Mr. Jackson's work, but only the Family Bible to which it is intended as "a companion." We quite agree with Clericus Derbiensis as to the "utter incompetency of the reverend author or compiler to fulfil the task he has undertaken," but should be sorry for the Society to be wounded on his account.

The letter of the Rev. J. L., with the enclosed donation to the Society for the Suppression of Vice, "for their praiseworthy exertions in the matter of the King *versus* Carlile," have been duly forwarded.

We should have no possible objection to return SCRUTATOR's manuscript, had it not been destroyed, as papers invariably are when done with by the printer.

We have forwarded the paper of J. H. as requested.

We differ materially from F. M. In common with him, indeed, we highly respect Dr. Coplestone, and have frequently, and in no hesitating terms, expressed our opinion of his merits ; but we cannot admit that his Devon and Exeter Hospital Sermon is entitled to the commendation which F. M. bestows ; and, on the contrary, we continue, notwithstanding Dr. Coplestone's own able vindication of it, to think it materially defective. If F. M. and Dr. Coplestone will do us the favour to turn to our Review of Dean Kirwan's Sermons (vol. for 1815, p. 518,) they will see the ground of our objection more fully developed. The whole of the discussion (pp. 535—541) is more or less applicable to the present case, but particularly the last two pages. They will there see that the views which have given them so much dissatisfaction, were maintained in all their force long before Dr. Coplestone's sermon appeared ; and they are views which we believe to be incontrovertible.